

STATE LIBRARY OF PENNSYLVANIA

main,stk

821W858

Britain's bulwarks, or, The Br



0 0001 00354428 3

CLASS 821

BOOK W/858

VOLUME



PENNSYLVANIA  
STATE LIBRARY



THE LAUNCH





C. MEMMISH

2

**BRITAIN'S  
BULWARKS;**

OR,

**THE BRITISH SEAMAN:**

**A Poem,**

**IN EIGHT BOOKS.**

---

BY

**GEORGE WOODLEY,**

*Author of The Church-Yard, and other Poems.*

---

EMBELLISHED

**WITH EIGHT ENGRAVINGS.**

---

**PLYMOUTH-DOCK:**

PRINTED AND SOLD BY L. CONGDON, AT THE TELEGRAPH-  
OFFICE, FORE-STREET; AND MAY BE HAD OF THE  
PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN  
AND COUNTRY.

---

1811.



TO

SIR ROBERT CALDER, BT.

ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE,

AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF HIS MAJESTY'S

SHIPS AND VESSELS AT PLYMOUTH.

---

*Silbury*  
SIR,

DEDICATIONS have been so generally debased by being made vehicles for the most abject flattery, that a man who conscientiously regards his words, needs some share of literary seamanship, lest, in

\*A 3

43535

#### DEDICATION.

---

endeavouring to avoid that rock, whereon so many have split, he run on the opposite sands of negligence, or inattention, to the honours of his patron.

Happily, however, for me; the long and illustrious services of Sir Robert Calder are so well known, and his character is so highly and justly estimated; that I may, without censure, spare the detail of achievements which are honourably recorded on the page of History, and imprinted on the hearts not only of his admiring countrymen, but of the well-informed throughout Europe.

It is, however, my duty to add, that your bravery as a seaman is only equalled by your politeness as a gentleman; and that the high honour which you have con-



DEDICATION.

---

ferred upon me in permitting this work to bear your name, was still further enhanced by the obliging manner in which this permission was conveyed.

That you may long continue to adorn that honourable profession of which you are so distinguished an ornament, is the sincere wish of,

SIR,

Your most grateful,

Most obedient,

And devoted Servant,

GEORGE WOODLEY.

*Plymouth, }  
July 1, 1811. }*



## PREFACE.

---

ON submitting to the world a work in a department of poetry in which few have ventured to write, and still fewer have succeeded in writing well; it appears essentially necessary to prefix a few introductory observations, in order that the reader may have some idea of what he is to expect, and the author may be enabled to state such circumstances respecting his performance, as shall be requisite for the better understanding of his design, and consequent ability to judge of its execution.

My object, in the following work, has been to depict the dangers and to celebrate the achieve-

## PREFACE.

ments of the BRITISH SEAMAN. Various, and almost incredible are the vicissitudes which the naval guardians of our isle are in the habit of constantly encountering; and those who are acquainted with the character of that valuable body of men, will readily allow that their conduct under every trying occurrence, is such as to entitle them to the esteem and admiration of the world. The noble train of virtues which unite to complete the character of a Briton, is nowhere displayed in greater perfection than in the TRUE-BRED TAR.

Under a high sense, therefore, of the important services of our brave naval defenders, and with a view of doing justice to their unparalleled exertions, the present work was undertaken; in which the various duties of the naval character, from the Commander to the Cabin-Boy, are faithfully detailed through all the changes experienced by the vessel, from the time of her *launching* to the period of her being *laid up in ordinary*; embra-



## PREFACE.

---

ging the diversified labours of the *outfit, cruise, blockade, chace, action, and return to port.*

How I have succeeded in this hazardous attempt; with what judgment circumstances have been invented, arranged, or omitted, so as best to answer the end proposed; must be left to the decision of the public. That there is much room for improvement, in the following pages, will be but too easily discovered. I lament the fact which I cannot remedy. Should circumstances permit, the poem may, perhaps, at some future period, appear in a more correct form. But it should always be remembered, that

“Whoe’er expects a *faultless* piece to see,  
“Expects—what never was, nor e’er will be.”

POPE.

and it may, perhaps, disarm the fury of the most violent critic, when he is informed that the whole of the present poem (amounting to above four thousand lines) was written in the course of a few months: not in the hours of leisure and retire-

## PREFACE.

ment; not amidst the conveniencies of the student; but at a time when the author was so oppressed with a multiplicity of arduous business, as did not allow the necessary pauses for refection, much less for relaxation of any sort: when the earliest hour he could devote to it was ten or eleven o'clock at night; and when sickness and death in his family imperiously drew his attention to other, and much less grateful concerns. These facts are submitted to the candour of the reader.

One observation on the language, shall be all that I will offer.—If some of the lines, wherein technical terms are introduced, sound harsh to the ears of the landsman; he should remember that they are adapted to the current naval dialect, which delights in elisions, as is shewn in the glossary. Technical expressions have neither been sedulously sought nor carefully avoided; as, in the former case, the work would have been nearly unintelligible to readers on land; and, in the latter, it could scarcely have been called a naval poem, as com-

## PREFACE.

---

mon propriety teaches us to clothe our characters in the costume of their country.

To those highly respectable personages who have honoured me with their countenance in the publication of this work, I feel greatly indebted. It has been my earnest endeavour to render the object of their kindness not undeserving of their protection; and should I be so happy as to contribute by my humble labours to relieve the tedium of an idle hour, which might otherwise hang heavily on their hands; I shall neither regret the labour of writing, nor the anxiety which (from a number of causes that need not be particularized) has attended almost every step towards its publication.

G. W.





LIST  
OF  
SUBSCRIBERS.

---

Lieut. Alleyn, *Endymion*.

Lieut. Anstruther, R. N.

Mr. Anderson, R. N.

Mr. Adamson, R. N.

Amphitrite.

Capt. Lord Balgonie, H. M. S. *Romulus*.

Capt. S. Ballard, R. N.

Capt. Bloye, R. N.

Capt. Boger, R. N.

Dr. Beatty, Physician to the Fleet.

Richard Birt, Esq.

J. Bone, Esq. Dock.

Lieut. Batt, *Conflict*.

Lieut. F. Boyce, H. M. S. *Crocus*.

Mr. J. H. Bond, Purser, H. M. S. *Ariel*.

#### SUBSCRIBERS.

---

Mr. E. Blackmore, R. N.

Miss Brown, Dock.

Mrs. Beverly.

Mr. J. Bignall.

Mr. John Boyle.

Belisarius.

Admiral Sir Robert Calder, Bart.

Capt. Cardon, R. N.

Capt. Codd, R. N. Dock.

Lieut. Charles Cumby, R. N.

Lieut. Christian, R. N.

Mr. James Corbet, Surgeon, H. M. S. *Aboutkir*.

Mr. Robert Congdon, Fleet-street, London.

Mr. P. Collom, Dock.

Mr. Clewlow.

Mr. Colley, Dock.

Mr. Christie.

The Dock Reading Society.

The Dock Minerva Society.

William Davie, Esq. Morice-square, Dock.

Robert Dawe, Esq.

SUBSCRIBERS.

---

Mr. Josias Dawe.

Mr. James Dawe.

Mr. George Dominy.

Mr. Thomas Driskell, Dock-yard.

A Young Dragon.

Mr. J. Evans, R. N.

Mr. Edwards, Plymouth.

D. Forrest, Esq.

Lieut. W. E. Fiott, R. N.

Mr. W. Fotheringham, Dock Bank.

Mr. Fairweather, R. N.

Dowager Lady Graves, Thankses.

J. Greenway, Esq. Stoke.

Lieut. Gilbert, H. M. S. *Revenge*.

Mr. Goude.

Mr. R. R. Grose, Dock.

Mr. Gordon, Dock.

Capt. Hawkins, H. M. S. *Minerva*.

Richard Holmes, Esq. *Salvador del Mundo*.

Mrs. Holmes, Torpoint.

SUBSCRIBERS.

---

Lieut. J. E. Hare, *Fervent*.

Lieut. Charles Hewit, R. N.

Mr. S. Hood, R. N.

Mr. James Hill.

Mr. Wm. Holman.

Hon. Capt. Irby, R. N.

H. I. Johns, Esq. Dock Bank.

Lieut. Jacomb, R. N.

Capt. John King, R. N.

Lieut. John Mc. Kirby, H. M. S. *Revenge*.

Mr. John King, Purser, H. M. S. *Seine*.

Mr. Nicholas Jeffery Keast.

Mr. John Loring, H. M. S. *Revenge*.

Mr. Wm. Lloyd, R. N. *Venerable*.

J. Mitchell, Esq. Falmouth.

Mr. Murray.

Richard Nash, Esq.

Capt. James Nash, *Salvador del Mundo*, 2 Copies.

Capt. John Nash, H. M. S. *Revenge*.



## SUBSCRIBERS.

---

R. Nicholson, Esq. Plymouth.

Mr. W. H. Newton.

Mr. R. Nixon, R. N.

A Son of Neptune.

Mr. John Oliver, R. N.

Capt. Peake, R. N.

Capt. Palmer, R. N.

Capt. Pellew, R. N.

Mrs. Prescott.

Lieut. James Pickard.

Mr. T. Paterson, Assistant Surgeon, *Saldanha*.

Capt. Rogers, R. N.

Capt. Richardson, *Semiramis*.

Lieut. G. Richards, R. N.

Assistant Commissary General Ragland.

Trevillian Rawle, Esq.

F. Roberts, Esq.

Mr. Henry Ralph.

Capt. Salt, R. N.

Capt. Scobell, R. N.

SUBSCRIBERS.

---

W. P. Smyth, Esq. George-street, Dock.

W. D. Sole, Esq.

Lieut. Stewart, R. N.

Lieut. Sawyer, R. N.

Mr. Spurling, Dock.

Mr. R. B. Sanderson, R. N.

Mr. J. Sloggett.

H. C. Teed, Esq. Plymouth.

Richard Thomas, Esq. Dock.

Richard Thomas, Esq. Oporto.

Mr. P. Thorn, R. N.

Mr. Traill.

Mr. C. D. Unwin, R. N. *Peacock*.

Lieut. Weymouth, H. M. S. *Revenge*.

Lieut. W. E. Wright.

Mr. John Adams Woodley, Portsmouth.

Mr. N. Winn, Dock.

Mr. E. Wylde, R. N.

Mr. J. K. White, R. N.

Mr. Yarwood, Purser, H. M. S. *Dragon*.

Mr. Josiah Yates, Plymouth.

---

## GLOSSARY.

---

MANY of the sea-terms which are used in the course of the poem, are explained in the passages where they occur. The meaning of many others is so obvious, that it was thought superfluous to comment on them. Those which are of a more difficult interpretation are here briefly illustrated.

N. B. The Engravings, and especially the *Outfit*, will be found very materially to assist the reader, if a stranger to nautic affairs, in forming an idea of the various parts of a ship and her rigging, and of the peculiar ends which each is designed to answer.



- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>AFT</b>, towards the stern.</p> <p><b>After</b>, belonging to the hinder part of a ship.</p> <p><b>A-head</b>, before.</p> <p><b>A-lee</b>, to the side opposite to that against which the wind blows.</p> <p><b>Alongside</b>, by the side of.</p> <p><b>A-stern</b>, behind.</p> <p><b>Bells</b>. The bell strikes eight times at 4, 8, and 12 o'clock. It is struck every half hour, and receives an additional stroke at each. Each blow is by seamen denominated a <i>bell</i>; thus, half past eleven o'clock is called <i>seven bells</i>, because the bell is then struck seven times, and so of the rest.</p> <p><b>Bent</b>. A sail is said to be <i>bent</i> when it is fastened to the yard, and ready for use.</p> <p><b>Bittacle</b>, or <b>Binnacle</b>, the box that holds the compass; in which a candle is placed at night, for the direction of the steersman.</p> <p><b>Blue-Peter</b>, a blue flag with a white square in the middle, denoting a ship on the point of sailing.</p> <p><b>Boarding-nettings</b>, large nets fastened along the shrouds, to prevent the enemy from boarding.</p> | <p><b>Boom</b>, a sort of spar, fastened to the end of the yard for the purpose of setting more sail.</p> <p><b>Bow</b>, (pronounced like <i>bough</i>) the round part of a ship near the head.</p> <p><b>Bowsprit</b>, (pronounced <i>bo-sprit</i>) a kind of mast, projecting diagonally from the bows.</p> <p><b>Brails</b>, small ropes fastened to the sides of the sails.</p> <p><b>Bread-room</b>, a place beneath the lower deck, where the provisions are served out to the crew.</p> <p><b>To bring up standing</b>, to anchor before the sails are reduced. Metaphorically, to interrupt suddenly and forcibly.</p> <p><b>Broadside</b>, a discharge of all the guns on one side of a ship, nearly at the same time.</p> <p><b>Bulk-heads</b>, wooden partitions.</p> <p><b>Buoy</b>, a large hollow floating body, made of wood, and fastened to an anchor.</p> <p><b>Burgoo</b>, oatmeal and water boiled to the consistency of batter.</p> <p><b>Capstan</b>, a large cylindrical roller, turned by levers, and used for raising the anchors and other great weights.</p> <p><b>Chains</b>, (properly, <i>channels</i>) a</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## GLOSSARY.

- sort of wooden platform or scaffold. fixed against the ship's side, to which the shrouds are fastened. To resist the great weight and strain of the masts, the channels are secured by immense chains to the side, and from them they derive their name.
- Clue, of a sail*, the lower corners.
- , *of a hammock*, the small ropes at the ends, by which it is slung.
- Cockpit*, a sort of surgery; adjoining the bread-room.
- To coil a rope*, to wind it in circles.
- To coin down a rope*, to coil it down flatly.
- Courses*, the two largest sails. See mast.
- Cross-trees*, pieces of wood fixed transversely over the head of the topmast, to receive the shrouds of the topgallant mast.
- Ensign*, a large flag, red, white, or blue, with a union in the first quarter. All ships bear an ensign of the same colour as the flag worn by their respective Commanders in Chief.
- Fid*, a piece of iron or wood, pointed at one end, for making holes. Figuratively, a large slice
- To fish a mast or yard*, to strengthen it by fastening pieces of wood to a damaged place.
- Fore-and-aft*, from one end to the other.
- Forecastle*, (pronounced *forcassel*) a short deck, on the fore part of the ship.
- To founder*, to sink.
- To furl*, to tie up the sails to the yards.
- Gaff*, a sort of half yard, projecting diagonally from the top of the mizen-mast over the stern, to which the ensign is hoisted when displayed at sea.
- Galley*, the fire-place; which stands under the fore-castle.
- Gangway*, a narrow platform, at the top of the side, connecting the fore-castle with the quarter-deck.
- Grating*, a wooden covering for the hatchways, having small square apertures for the admission of air.
- To Graze*, to press rudely against; to scratch or rub.
- Gunnel*, the top of the side.
- To hand a sail*, to furl it.
- Harpoon*, a sort of dart with a wooden handle, about eight or ten feet long; used in taking large fish.
- Hatchways*, large square openings in the middle of the decks, for the ascent or descent of the crew, &c.
- Harve*, that part of the bow through which the cable passes.
- Harwser*, a small cable.
- Helm*, the rudder.
- Helmsman*, he who steers.
- Held*, a large space below the decks, where the ballast, water, and cables are kept.
- Jib-boom*, a sort of topmast projecting beyond the bowsprit.
- Junk*, old cable. It is said to be *worked up* when the good yarns are taken out and applied to other purposes.
- Lanyards*, small ropes.
- Lee, Lee-ward* (pronounced *lu-ard*) sheltered from the wind.
- Log*, a daily account of the employment of the crew, &c.
- To luff*, to bring the head of the ship nearer to the point whence the wind blows.
- To make land*, to discern, or draw near to it.
- To make sail*, to set sail.
- Masts*. As much knowledge of the various parts and purposes of a ship's rigging may be derived from an accurate acquaintance with her masts, the fol-

## GLOSSARY.

lowing observations may be useful to strangers:

All ships, properly so called, have three masts; of which that which stands nearest to the head is called the foremast; that in the middle, the main-mast; and that which is highest to the stern, (which is also the shortest and smallest) the mizen-mast. On these are fixed the *fore*, *main*, and *mizen topmasts*; which are again surmounted by their *topgallant* masts and *royal* masts. The *yards*, *sails*, and *rigging*, take their names from that mast to which they respectively belong; as, the *fore-sail*, *foretop-sail*, *foretopgallant-sail*, and *foretopgallant-royal*. (The *fore* and *main*-sails are also called *the courses*.) The masts are secured by *shrouds*, at the side; by *backstays*, behind; and by *stays*, before. The stays descend from the top of each mast, to the foot of the mast of the same denomination in front, and give name to the three-pointed sails which are hoisted on them; as, the *main-stay-sail*, *maintopmast-stay-sail*, &c. This latter rule, however, admits of some exceptions, as what should be called the *foretopgallant-stay-sail*, is styled the *jib*; beyond which there is sometimes a *flying-jib*. The *bowsprit* is also crossed by a yard, and sometimes by two, which are called the *spritsail-yard* and *spritsail-top-sail yard*, on which sails are occasionally set, in very fine weather.

*Naked poles*, bare masts.

*No near!* is a command opposed to luff, which see.

*To near*, to draw nigh.

*Nettle*, two or three rope-yarns twisted together.

*Pendant*, (pronounced *Pennet*) a long and very narrow flag.

*Port*, or *Port-hole*, a square opening in the side, for the guns.

*Poop*, the highest and shortest deck in the ship, extending from the stern to the mizen-mast.

*Prow*, or *Prore*, the sharp part of the head between the bows.

*Quarter-deck*, the deck next below the poop, extending from the stern to the mainmast.

*To reef*, to reduce the sails.

*Road*, or *Roadsted*, an open harbour.

*Royals*, the highest sails. See mast.

*Rudder*, the instrument by which a ship is steered.

*Sconce*, a sort of glass window used in the store-rooms, magazines, &c.

*Sea*, a wave.

*Sennet*, plaited rope-yarns.

*To set sail*, to use more sail.

*Sheave*, a pulley.

*Sheets*, ropes fastened to the lower corners of the sails, to extend them.

*Sheeted home*. A sail is said to be *sheeted home*, when the bottom is drawn out to its full dimensions.

*Sheers*, a cluster of yards used on board *sheer-hulks* for hoisting the masts into, or out of, other ships.

*Shores*, large wooden pillars, used to support ships when building.

*To shorten sail*, to reduce it.

*Shrouds*, large ropes by the sides of the masts, serving as ladders to the seamen.

*Sidesmen*, attendants, to receive visitors of distinction.

*Skids*, large beams, extending from one gangway to the other, on which some of the boats, &c. are stowed.

*Sounding lead*, the lead made use



# GLOSSARY.

- of to ascertain the depth of water by *sounding*.
- Spell*, a turn of duty.
- To splice*, to join two ropes together by the ends in a different manner from *knotting*.
- To spring a mast*, &c. to crack it.
- To spring a leak*, to admit water.
- Spun yarn*, several rope yarns twisted together by a winch.
- Stay*, see mast.
- Stem*, the same as *prow*, which see.
- Stern*, the ornamented end of a ship.
- Stocks*, large blocks of wood, on which ships are built.
- Stopper*, a piece of large rope, with a knot at one end; which is fastened to the cable to secure it.
- Studding-sails*, long narrow sails, extended by the side of the square sails in fine weather.
- Swab*, (pronounced *swob*) old junk, beaten out into rope yarns, and fastened at one end: used as a mop.
- Swamped*, filled with water.
- Tacks*, ropes at the corners of the courses. The tacks are used to draw one point or corner of the sail forward, while the sheet at the other corner is employed to draw it aft. This is practised when sailing with an oblique wind.
- To tack*, to turn the ship round by bringing her head up against the wind.
- Timoneer*, the helmsman.
- Topmast*,
- Topsail*,
- Topgallantmast*, } pronoun- }  
*Topgallantsail*. } ced *to gāln* } *Sec mast.*
- To tow*, to draw along by ropes.
- Treenail*, (pronounced *trinnel*) a large wooden pin.
- Traced*, fastened along by small ropes.
- Union-Jack*, a small flag, with a red cross and blue quarters (divided diagonally) on a white ground.
- To unmoor*, to raise one anchor.
- Waist*, the main, or middle deck.
- Wales*, (perhaps incorrectly, for *wheels*) the black part of a ship's side which is immediately above the water, and which projects two or three inches beyond the higher part.
- Ward-Room*, a large general cabin for the use of the higher officers.
- Watch*, a division of one third of the crew, who do duty four hours.
- Water-sail*, a sail that is displayed over the stern, near the water, in fine weather.
- To weigh anchor*, to raise it from the ground.
- Well*, the deepest part of the ship. An enclosed space near the mainmast, in which the pumps are fixed.
- Wing*, the sides of the ship, near the well.
- Yard*, see mast.
- Yard-arm*, the end of a yard.



# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

BOOK I.

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*Introduction.—Subject proposed.—Political and patriotic Reflections.—Address to Britons.—Bravery of the Seaman.—Greatness of the Subject.—Homer and Camocns.—Address to Memory.—The Subject begins.—General Festivity.—The Dock-Yard.—Ship on the Stocks.—The British Oak.—Patriotic Wish.—Increasing Interest.—Immense Concource of Spectators, on Land and Water.—Banners.—Music.—The Commissioner.—Further Reflections.—Benefits of Civilization.—The Shores knocked away.—The Ship is launched amidst the Transports of the Multitude.—She is taken in tow, and brought into Dock.*

---

# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK I.

### The Launch.

WHILE Gallia's despot, with a pow'ful hand,  
Throws his strong fetters o'er each neighb'ring land,  
(Rais'd up by Heav'n in these flagitious times  
To scourge a world for unrepented crimes!)  
And, whilst beneath his feet their sceptres lie,  
On BRITAIN casts a dire malignant eye;  
Supremely blest, if to his abjeet train  
Of ruin'd states, this island he could gain,  
Whose fair prosperity distracts him more  
Than all the conquests he has gain'd before :—  
Be mine the grateful task the song to raise,  
To celebrate her naval guardians' praise ;

---

Who, o'er the mountain-waves that round her roll,  
Like wary watch-dogs, ever active, prow!;  
Through calms and storms their even stations keep,  
By all confess'd VICTORIOUS O'ER THE DEEP!  
On them (beneath the highest, BEST defence!)  
With hope assur'd and perfect confidence,  
Britannia looks for safety and repose,  
Whilst all the world an anxious terror knows!  
In wild amaze each subjugated land  
That bows beneath the stern oppressor's hand;  
Surveys the skill, the courage, and address,  
Which join the efforts of her sons to bless.  
What, though the foe, with fury in his eyes,  
"*Ships, colonies, and commerce!*" madly 'eries;  
And, to assert his title to the seas,  
With vengeance fulminates his vile *decrees!*  
What boot his threats, while o'er the wat'ry world  
The victor-flag of England is unfurl'd;  
And her stout bulwarks scour the azure plain,  
To scout the straggling Frenchmen from the main?  
Lo! ev'ry wave that beats on Gallia's shore,  
Proclaims the daily less'ning of her pow'r;

And, whilst her ruler plans his subtle schemes,  
And still of naval honours idly dreams ;  
Islands reduc'd, and vessels captive made,  
Proclaim the *growing empire* of his trade!

Whilst thus preponderates Britannic skill,  
And Gallia's conquer'd fleets our harbours fill ;  
Let stern Conscription, with remorseless hand,  
Drag forth the flow'r and promise of her land,  
And foul Coereion wander near and far,  
To *force* unwilling *strangers* to the war,\*  
And from each shore the nerves of commerce drain }  
To aid his weak endeavours on the main ;— }  
Vain are their efforts, all their wishes vain !  
For ne'er can those, reluctantly who go,  
In conflict's hour an equal ardour know  
With those whose breasts the noblest motives fire ;  
Whom virtue warms, and gen'rous thoughts inspire.

---

\* The unjust and unjustifiable mode adopted by Buonaparte for the manning his fleet, by impressing the Norwegian Seamen into his service, exhibits at once the wretched state of his navy, and of the nations under his dominion.

---

These deep events demand my glowing song,  
By meditation nurs'd in silence long.  
And lo! yon jutting cliff that proudly braves  
The noisy insults of besieging waves,  
Where elust'ring trees bestrew the mountain o'er,  
And wave responsive to the billows' roar;—  
Proffers the muse a grand, romantic seat;  
The oak above, the ocean at her feet!  
Stupendous ocean, hail! my gladden'd eye  
Delights thy ample volume to desery.  
Whether young halcyons on the waters sleep,  
Or blust'ring tempests o'er the billows sweep;  
Still pleasing to the patriot is the main,  
Where Britons hold their undisputed reign!  
See yon tall ship, which mighty waves obey,  
Gliding sublimely through the fluid way,  
Whilst, gently sporting to th' inconstant blast,  
The slender pendant flutters from the mast;  
(E'en now, methinks, slow rising on my ear,  
The boatswain's pipe, the sailors' hum I hear!)  
Hence Britain's dreadful fires, in vengeance hurl'd,  
Rule the subjected main, and, in the main, the world!

Natives of Albion! ye, who proudly claim  
As your best privilege, the British name;  
A name to valour and to virtue dear;  
Which ancient Rome's proud vet'rans could  
    revere;  
And modern Europe stands aghast to hear;  
Awhile each meaner avocation spurn,  
And to the bard with silent wonder turn;  
Whose votive verse the noblest deeds engage,  
That ever charm'd th' attention of the age.  
Alike on ev'ry rank and class I call;  
The lofty theme demands the ear of all.  
Ye virtuous fair! of ev'ry charm possess'd,  
That sheds a lustre o'er the female breast;  
In your approving smile the humble bard  
Expects his sweetest and his best reward.  
For, if the brave alone deserve the fair,\*  
The song must surely your protection wear,  
Which paints the labours of as brave a crew,  
As e'er the pen of moral fiction† drew.

\* See Dryden's Ode.

† By *moral fiction*, I mean, *ancient romance*, the perusal of which I would most earnestly recommend to my fair readers in place of the



---

With joy the glowing muse her song shall swell,  
Their various virtues, and their toils to tell.  
When fierce Bellona from her iron ear,  
Led by Ambition, blows the blast of war ;  
Whilst, high in air her crimson flag unfurl'd,  
To rage and slaughter stirs a troubled world :  
England, (supremely blest !) encompass'd round  
By rocks and waves that form a mighty mound  
To guard her from her foes ; at distance hears  
The neigh of battle, and the strife of spears.  
Though o'er the continent, in dread array  
Tremendous cohorts urge their blood-stain'd way ;  
Whilst Rapine, Pillage, Mis'ry, stalk behind,  
Eye the sack'd town and snuff the sulph'rous wind ;  
No fear of scenes so horrible she knows ;  
For, round the globe, wherever ocean flows,

---

insipid and disgusting farragoes of nonsense known by the name of modern *novels*. Ancient romance is like a fair picture, with the only fault of being too highly coloured. If it did not exhibit men as they were, it exhibited them as they should be.

“ For contemplation, he, and valour, form'd ;

“ For softness, she, and sweet attractive grace !”

but the Anna, Regina, Sophia, Wilhelmina effusions of the day, are disgraceful to their writers, and fraught with the most pernicious consequences to their readers !

Her naval bulwarks, of gigantic size,  
Protect her commerce, and her foes chastise.  
She needs no castles, no embattled walls,  
To check the inroads of the furious Gauls ;  
(Alas ! the hugest piles of walls were vain,  
Should e'er the crafty enemy obtain,  
Co-rival strength and honour on the main !  
Her strongest walls are those that press the wave ;  
Her best defence, her seamen, tried and brave ;  
Who, when the foe concentrates all his force,  
And to some fav'rite object bends his course,  
Pounce, like a flock of vultures, on their prey,  
And bear his mutilated hopes away.

These would I sing ; so should the world esteem  
And prize the humble numbers for the theme.  
And say, ye critics, ye who best can tell  
The labour that attends on writing well,—  
What nobler subject can a patriot muse,  
To grace her lyre and win attention, chuse ?  
The mighty master of the pow'r of song,  
Around whose harp enraptured nations throng ;

---

(Seraphic harp ! from whose vibrations roll,  
E'en yet, the tide of rapture on the soul ;  
Altho' the bard, no more by want oppress'd,  
Has long lain quiet, silent, and at rest !)  
And Lusitania's bard, alike inspir'd  
With ardour pure as ever patriot fir'd ;—  
Wish'd for no honour, sought no higher praise,  
Than to their country to devote their lays.  
Yet,—foul disgrace to each degen'rate age,  
When Homer and Camoens trod the stage !—  
Those bards, around whose brows such laurels  
twine,  
Whose smallest leaf would be a gem on mine ;  
Tho' deeply skill'd in the celestial art,  
To rouse, to soothe, to lure the virtuous heart ;  
Whose lays are yet with admiration read ;—  
Begg'd for subsistence !—dy'd for want of bread !  
And to their country each bequeath'd a name  
That eover'd it with glory,—and with shame !

Away, dull thought ! my muse, expand thy wing,  
And bid a nation listen while I sing.

---

Fancy, I woo thee not ! let others raise  
The structure of applause on fiction's lays,  
Plain truth shall form the basis of my song,  
Sublime, though simple ; and, tho' gentle, strong !  
Come, faithful mem'ry, and depict the scene,  
The various duties, which these eyes have seen ;  
And with a touch correct, in colours gay,  
Describe the toils of many a former day.  
My pray'r is heard ! before my bright'ning eyes  
The incidents of former times arise ;  
Judgment ! direct the inexperience'd muse,  
What portion to select and what refuse.  
Thrice happy ! if the rude, incondite strain,  
That strives to paint the dangers of the main,  
May, for the guardian heroes of our isle,  
From beauty's lips extract the cheering smile :  
And when (which hasten heav'n ! ) sweet peace again  
Shall bless the earth with her auspicious reign ;  
Then may their toils severe, and labours hard,  
Find, in their country's praise, their rich, their  
DUE reward !

---

THE day was fine ; soft Eurus gently blew,  
And sweetly fann'd the rays that Phœbus threw.  
Labour repos'd. An overbearing glee  
Proclaim'd a festive day of jubilee ;  
And hark ! the merry bells in concert loud,  
With greater joy inspire the cheerful croud,  
Who, through the streets, on Pleasure's tripping  
toe,  
With smiling countenance, delighted go.  
Like painted insects, daneing on each spray,  
The multitude appears ; as thiek, as gay.  
A gen'ral tendency to mirth and joy,  
Illumes each cheek, and glows in ev'ry eye.  
E'en yon hoar spire, whose many-fraetur'd wall  
Each passing gust threats with a dreadful fall,  
Displays a flaunting banner high in air,  
And seems the gen'ral merriment to share.  
Still erowd to crowd and troop to troop succeeds,  
And one gay company another leads ;  
No intermission to relieve the eye,  
But swift as clouds in storms the parties fly.

What grand event, what eye-enchancing sight  
Such eager expectation can invite?—

This day a gallant ship, with lordly sweep,  
Shall make her entrance on the foaming deep,  
And add a link to that tremendous chain  
Which o'er the ocean binds Britannia's reign!

The lofty portals of the spacious yard,  
Now to the vast assembly are unbarr'd;  
And as a mighty river, swell'd by rain,  
Bursts the strong banks that would its course }  
    restrain, }  
And flows in broken torrents o'er the plain;  
So bursts within the yard the countless throng,  
Each one impelling and impell'd along;  
And to the spot where massy timbers bear  
The pond'rous bark, all anxiously repair.

Lo! where the object of ten thousand eyes,  
Erect on shores, in all her grandeur lies!  
Fabric immense! where strength and beauty join;  
And judgment regulates the vast design!



---

How well adapted is the whole to brave  
The brunt of war when storms or cannons rave !  
Huge piles of oak the solid sides compose ;  
Oak that spontaneous on our island grows ;  
Which heav'n, that gave the storm-defying tree,  
Ordain'd to guard our land and liberty.  
When the great sov'reign Ruler of the skies  
From night and chaos bade creation rise,  
Whilst, at his word, the universe upsprung,  
And all the morning stars together sung ;\*  
He, as his eyes the mighty work survey'd,  
And bless'd the beauteous frame his hands had made,  
The teeming soil of ev'ry clime endued  
With what might best subserve the gen'ral good.  
On Lebanon he bade tall cedars rise,  
And Norway's spiry firs to pierce the skies ;  
With citron groves and virent myrtle glades,  
He well endow'd Hesperia's gentle shades ;  
But Britain, (favour'd land !) decreed to reign  
The glorious empress of the vassal main,

---

\* See that sublime description of the great work of creation, in the xxxviii<sup>th</sup> chapter of Job.



Requir'd a nobler boon; the word he spoke,  
And, at the word, arose the stately oak !  
And lo ! majestic on the lofty prow,  
Its semblance strikes the gazer's eye below ;  
With admiration strikes, while he perceives  
Its spreading arms, its ever-verdant leaves !  
Like that majestic tree it seems to stand  
Which to the monarch\* of Chaldea's land  
Portentous vision bore : so vast, so high,  
Its root, the centre pierc'd ; its branch, the sky :  
To whose green boughs each wand'rer of the air  
Repair'd and found a happy shelter there.  
Hail, royal tree ! great monarch of the wood !  
Nor less the sov'reign of the abject flood !  
From thee, alike, the humble and the great,  
The peasant and the king derive a seat.  
Thou giv'st the toys which infancy engage,  
And lend'st assistance to decrepit age ;  
Surround'st the couch where first we draw our  
    breath ;  
Receiv'st us into keeping after death.

---

\* Nebuchadnezzar.

The mulb'rry tree which gentle Shakespear's hand  
Matur'd to deck his Warwick's honour'd land;—  
The weeping willows, which in Twick'nham's  
shades

In sympathetic feeling wav'd their heads;—  
Shall long from Genius and from Taste receive  
That due regard which they alone can give;  
But, though they flourish still in vig'rous lays,  
Far short they fall of thy superior praise;  
Their feeble lustre vies with thine no more  
Than a soft whisper with the tempest's roar!  
Soon may our eyes, O ever-honour'd tree!  
Soon may our gladden'd eyes with rapture see,  
Beneath thy spreading branches' friendly shade,  
The laurel and the olive lift their head;  
So Valour, glory-crown'd, his toils shall cease,  
And lay his sabre at the feet of Peace!

The hour approaches, when the wave shall feel  
The rude encroachments of her massy keel;  
And lo! on ev'ry hill that rises near,  
What vast promiscuous multitudes appear!

---

Here, poor and wealthy, old and young are found,  
And all distinction is an empty sound ;  
That post which best his purposes may suit,  
He who can gain, maintains without dispute.  
Some on the rocks, and others on the beach,  
Or hill, though distant, whence the eye can reach  
The gen'ral object, group'd in elusters stand,  
Thiek as the pebbles that bestrew the strand :  
And, round the borders of the shelving slip,  
Where stands, sublime, the vast, o'erhanging  
ship,  
So thiek the multitude who stand and gaze,  
That baffled Computation in amaze  
Declares himself unequal to relate  
The various units of the aggregate.  
But not the shore alone with erouds is press'd ;  
For, far and wide, spread o'er the river's breast,  
A thousand peopled boats display the sail ;  
A thousand petty flags invite the gale.

High o'er the deck Britannia's banners stream,  
And eatch new glories from the solar beam :

---

Ensigns and unions, flowing unconfin'd,  
Spread their gay hues before th' enamour'd wind.  
Above the rest, ting'd with celestial dyes,  
In conscious majesty, the standard flies;  
On whose broad field rich hieroglyphics trace  
The pow'r and honour of the British race.  
These, as they flutter wild in wanton play,  
Conspire to make e'en gaiety more gay.

Lo, in the midst of yonder splendid band  
A vet'ran chief is seen; with steady hand  
Prepar'd to give the gallant bark a name,  
Immortal as the register of Fame.  
While martial strains, majestic, strong, and sweet;  
Such as might woo a hermit from his seat,  
Impregn the air: Refining Fancy hears  
(Mellow'd to earth) the music of the spheres!

While Expectation sits in ev'ry eye,  
And Admiration stands and wonders by;  
Let sweet Reflection, Time's slow paces aid,  
And fill the pause Necessity has made.

This mighty ship, magnificent, and vast,  
Which like a mountain stands and braves the  
blast,

How wond'rously contriv'd is ev'ry part,

To shew the vast extent of human art!

View her all round, and let the busy eye

From stem to stern, from keel to gunnel fly;

And, after all, in truth and justice own

The grand and noble work surpass'd by none!

'Tis well. Now turn thine eyes to Greenland hoar,

Where ice-crown'd billows smite the trembling  
shore;

Or regions where the sun's prolific ray

Pours vertical, intolerable day;

And mark how great the change! Direct thy view

To yon poor savage in his rude canoe;

(For both are equally to art unknown,

Or in the torrid or the frigid zone.)

A tree's rough trunk, scoop'd out with little skill

Clos'd at the ends, subserves the owner's will;

And bless'd with such, fearless he goes and braves

The loudest menace of the frowning waves.

And such were Britons once; as rude as they;  
Lost to the blaze of intellectual day;  
Strangers to knowledge and to virtue's light,  
Their pow'rs lay buried in Cimmerian night:  
Till Rome's proud hosts, whom thirst of conquest bore  
From softer scenes to Albion's stormy shore;  
Pour'd like a torrent on these helpless parts,  
Arms in their van, but in their rear the arts.  
What tho' their steps in slaughter were embued,  
And Viet'ry's laurels were with blood bedew'd?  
That gracious Providence, whose sov'reign will  
Stands clearly shewn in drawing good from ill,  
At the fit season bade the tempest cease,  
And war and want gave place to plenteous peace.

(So when old Nilus rears him from his bed,  
And o'er th' adjacent land his waters spread;  
Tho' in his rise he desolates the plain,  
Blessings and fruitfulness attend his wane.)

Then Genius, taking Knowledge for his guide,  
March'd on to perfectness with rapid stride.



Commeree and War,—for which, so long renown'd,  
Britannia's sons with lasting wreaths are crown'd,—  
Join'd to depopulate the thiek-grown wood,  
To rear majestic buildings on the flood.

The ship launch'd forth, and o'er the buoyant  
tide,

The infant Navy rode in nautic pride.

By them, bold Traffic, from remotest shores,

In Britain's lap their varied treasures pours ;

By them, our seamen,—brave and gen'rous host !

From ev'ry ill defend our native coast.

These benefits (if aught to them we owe),

From Science and from civil order flow.

But see ! the signal's giv'n ! With ready hand

The skilful artisans obey command ;

And lo ! their heavy mauls, with clanking sound,

Now fell her strong supporters to the ground.

The mallet ceases. All the shores o'erthrown,

Awhile the haughty vessel stands alone ;

Erect she stands, in all her charms display'd,

As if she scorn'd of props the foreign aid ;



Waiting the moment when the rising tide  
Shall gently waft her down the shelving slide.  
She starts, she moves!—High to the sculptur'd  
prow,

A vial flies,—the liquor stains her bow.

Straight, with the deed, the chieftain silence broke,  
And nam'd the gallant bark, THE BRITISH OAK!

“The British Oak!” a thousand voices ery,

“The British Oak!” the echoing hills reply.

“To guard our matchless isle from foreign yokes,

“The choicest Bulwarks are her native Oaks!”

The beauteous ship, beginning now to feel  
The buoyant waters gath'ring round her keel;  
As if endued with consciousness, to know  
Her native element, rocks to and fro.  
And as a lover, who by doom severe  
Has wander'd long from all his soul holds dear,  
A quicker throb, a sense of new delight,  
Receives when first her cottage meets his sight;  
So now th' enormous vessel swiftly glides,  
And in a tempest stirs the flashing tides!

A patriotic glow in ev'ry breast,  
By ev'ry speaking eye is well confess'd.  
The multitude, regardless of their ears,  
Vent their loud transports in protracted cheers;  
Responsive echoes spread their clamours round,  
And the earth trembles at the mighty sound!  
As when by Boreas' stormy breath impell'd,  
In mountain waves the furious main is swell'd;  
Which, breaking on a bold and lengthen'd shore,  
Blanch'd with white foam, emit a dreadful  
    roar;  
The dreadful roar the hollow caves resound,  
And awful murmurs roll beneath the ground!

And now the dulcet concert, swelling loud,  
Rouses to extacy the free-born croud;  
Whilst, blending sweetly with the grateful strain,  
They shout, in deaf'ning roar, "Britannia rules the  
    main!"

Still o'er the bosom of the polish'd tide,  
The lordly fabric drifts in sov'reign pride;

Like some proud swan her swelling breast she laves,  
With gentle motion, in th' embracing waves.  
Around her now a fleet of boats repair,  
And take the wand'ring vessel in their care.  
Strong ropes and hawsers from the bows they  
    throw,  
And to the dock the floating castle tow :  
Again she moves, majestically slow !  
Their care succeeds ; and soon approaching near  
The shore, they graze the many-footed pier.  
Now the huge ropes are to the capstans bound,  
Which, heaving strong, emit a doleful sound ;  
The vessel seems unwilling to regain  
The hated shore,—her proper sphere, the main ;  
But, urg'd beyond her powers to oppose,  
With slow, reluctant pace, in dock she goes !

END OF BOOK I.

**BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

**BOOK II.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*Description of the Officers, and their Duties.—The Admiral or Captain.—Lieutenants.—Master.—Purser, and his Steward.—Surgeon.—Chaplain.—Midshipmen.—Boatswain.—Gunner.—Carpenter.—General Description of the Crew.—The Marine.—THE BRITISH SEAMAN.—Cabin-Boy; his History.—Division of the Crew.—The Ship prepared for Sea.—General Survey and Explanation, interspersed with occasional Reflections.—Pay-Day.—Bum-boats, Slop-sellers, &c.—Reflections on Seduction.—General Bustle to get on board.—Internal Appearance of the Ship.—Signal for Sailing.—Preparations to weigh.—Visitors depart.—The parting of Idas (the Cabin-Boy) and his Mother.—Operation of weighing Anchor.—Ship under Sail.—Her majestic Appearance.—Patriotic Effusion.*

---



First on the list, the brave Commander stands ;  
The sword he bears is honour'd by his hands.  
Practis'd in all the changes of the sea,  
'Tis his each latent danger to foresee ;  
And, to his courage joining care and skill,  
To guard the ship and crew from ev'ry ill.  
His gesture, voice, and attitude, refin'd,  
Bespeak the hero of superior mind,  
In whom the Christian and the warrior blend ;—  
The state's defender, and the seaman's friend !  
By long probation, duly taught to rule,  
(Himself well train'd in Discipline's harsh school)  
His gentle mandates, pleas'd, his crew obey,  
And bless the hand that bears such easy sway.  
Alternate kind regards their hearts supply,  
He lives for them, and they for him would die !  
One would have thought, (who saw the chieftain  
stand,  
Invested with the emblems of command)  
That Honour,—lofty fair !—had left the skies ;  
And, in (what most she loves !) the naval guise,  
Had stood personified to mortal eyes !



Beneath the poop his wooden palace spreads,  
Whose snow-white planks the seaman seldom  
treads.

There, day and night, in solemn naval state,  
A centinel parades before his gate,  
A naked cutlass glitt'ring in his hand;  
His office 'tis to watch the filt'ring sand;  
And ev'ry thirty minutes' lapse to tell,  
By sounding duly on the drowsy bell.  
Thus, with a trenchant blade and hour-glass grac'd,  
Whilst with a hurried step the deck he pac'd,  
One would have thought—and sure it were no crime!  
He stood, a nautic effigy of *Time*!

Next to the Chief, arrang'd on either hand,  
In order due, the brave Lieutenants stand.  
From Britain's peerage some their line derive,  
Who, to the finest sense of fame alive,  
Nobly th' advantages of wealth forego,  
To gather deathless laurels from the foe.  
Others, though scions from a humbler root,  
By skill and bravery to honours shoot:

---

Equal alike; for Wealth essays in vain  
To purchase rank or titles on the main;  
Open to all the path of glory lies,  
And those who persevere shall win the prize.  
They, only, who the yoke of service bear,  
Are fit the ensigns of command to wear.

These, like vicegerents, 'neath the chieftain's eye,  
Their various tasks with gen'rous ardour ply.  
Well train'd by practice, each his work performs,  
In harbour or at sea; in calms or storms.  
Duly as morn succeeds the gloomy night,  
Or Eve's chaste shadows veil the day's broad light;  
Alternate charge they take and watch they keep,  
Where'er the vessel wanders through the deep.

Lo! here the Master stands; in whom we view  
The skilful pilot of the vent'rous crew.  
'Tis his by sextant, compass, scale, and chart,  
And knowledge deep of navigation's art,  
To point th' abode of ambush'd rocks and sands;  
Compute the distances of unseen lands;

---

And, with such skill the passive ship to steer,  
That she nor rocks, nor sands, nor shoals shall  
fear.

Next see the Purser; steward of the crew;  
And from his wealth, they say, his name he drew;  
For all he caters; happy, if his gains  
Sufficient are to compensate his pains.  
Yet some there are (for honest hearts of oak  
Will, when they crack their biscuit, crack their joke)  
Who scruple not his office to defame,  
And vent their nautic wit against his name;  
And many a saying quaint, and cross-grain'd jeer,  
Full oft assails the Purser's Steward's ear,  
As from the bread-room he with mickle care  
To ev'ry mess deals out their daily fare.  
(Peace to their hearts! *their* spirits ever flow;  
Their laugh is honest, though their wit is low!)  
Accustom'd to the storm, with patient ears  
Their clam'rous gibes and boist'rous mirth he hears;  
Or, should his rising anger fire his brain,  
A full-charg'd oath snaps short the merry strain!

---

Well skill'd in physic and divinity,  
The Surgeon and the Chaplain next we see.  
Their office 'tis, the wounded to make whole;  
And this the body cures, and that the soul.  
Further of them our hist'ry shall display  
And praise their merits on a future day.

Next see the Midshipmen; a goodly train!  
The future guardians of Britannia's reign;  
Who, vested with a limited command,  
On the first step of Honour's ladder stand.  
Though in the humble vale they now appear,  
Just ent'ring on their difficult career;  
The highest British Chieftain on the main,  
Ere he his present greatness could attain,  
And full to view his glory was display'd;  
Grew up, like them, in privacy and shade.

So in a large and well-conducted school,  
Where Order and Propriety bear rule;  
The junior students, ere their breast is warm  
By the proud honours of a higher form;

Must, by probation long, and practice due,  
The various duties of their class pursue;  
Till, grounded well, they feel their breasts aspire,  
And keen Discrimination calls them high'r.

Of greater rank, yet humbler in their aim,  
(Plain and direct *their* road to wealth and fame)  
The Boatswain, Gunner, Carpenter behold,  
Whose various cares no volume could unfold.  
The first, a seaman, boisterous and bluff,  
His duty knows, and thinks he knows enough;  
Despising all that savours of polite,  
A piece of spunyarn is his emblem quite.  
To Orpheus' honours he may well advance,  
For to his pipe e'en stocks and billets dance!  
Of *Hermes* oft your *paynim* bards have sung.  
And of his famous rod all Greece has rung;  
And Katerfelto (conjurer most rare!)  
Has, with his cat, set *Christians* in a stare!  
But, to the rod and cat our Boatswain yields,  
Caduceus bows, and wizard malkin yields!

Like some sage Merlin have I seen him stand,  
And flourish in the air his magic wand,  
Whilst, to assist the all-prevailing spell,  
Words, worse than runie! from his visage fell;  
Heigh! pass! 'tis done! the will-compelling charm,  
Can e'en the pow'rs of indolence disarm;  
And those, who late, retir'd and groaning lay,  
To all the pains of—idleness, a prey,  
Rous'd by the magnet shock, their pains defy,  
And o'er the deck with youthful vigour fly!

The Gunner next; his duties are but few:  
To see the ordnance kept in order due  
Includes the whole; yet those who e'er have seen  
The horrors of his gloomy magazine  
In battle's dreadful hour, whilst overhead  
Tremble the decks beneath the cannons' tread;  
When, to supply the cartridge's demands,  
He and his busy crew, with nimble hands,  
Break up the barrels, strew in sable show'r  
The nitrous grain along the sheep-skin'd floor;



While through the greasy sconce, a feeble ray  
Sheds greater horror o'er the grim display ;  
Will want not for ideas, when he hears  
Of worlds of darkness, agony, and tears !

The third, an honest soul ! to whom it falls  
To keep in good repair the wooden walls ;  
Whether through yawning seams the waters  
pour,  
Or inward rottenness the planks devour.  
To mast, to bowsprit, boom, or taper yard,  
When sprung by gales or by rude bullets scarr'd,  
In danger's hour, he prompt assistance lends,  
And fishes, renovates, removes, or mends.

Who shall I chuse from the attendant throng,  
Of honest tars, to grace my novel song ?  
So much alike, that he, whose skilful hand,  
The faithful likeness can of one command,  
Does in that single exhibition trace  
The general lineaments of all the race.



Yet, ere I venture, in an arduous strain,  
To sketch the hardy native of the main;  
Permit my fair impartial verse to raise  
Another tribe to due and well-earn'd praise;  
A tribe full oft in Honour's courses seen,  
Nor idle there—stand forth thou bold Marine!  
When, 'gainst the hostile shore th' attack is  
plann'd;  
To storm the batteries that guard the land;  
Destroy the magazine, the tow'r, the fort,  
And open and defenceless leave the port;—  
Then this amphibious hero gives to fame  
At once the sailor's and the soldier's name.  
Nor less, when grappling with the Gallic fleet,  
And hostile bullets intercepting meet,  
His courage shines: in ranks the heroes stand,  
Rang'd on the poop; a cool intrepid band!  
Who, by their well-supported volleys, throw  
Promiscuous death and ruin 'mongst the foe!

I've sung the brave auxiliar in war;  
Now to attempt THE TRUE-BRED BRITISH TAR!

This wond'rous compound, in the which we see  
Tempers most unallied and strange, agree ;  
Differs so much from all of Adam's tribe,  
Hard is the task his manners to describe !  
The principal ingredients which compose  
Britannia's pride,—the terror of her foes !—  
Are, Courage, carried to so great extreme  
That some, almost, as Rashness it esteem ;  
Wide-handed Generosity, that tends  
Near to profusion, and his all expends.  
A total absenee of the thoughtful mood ;  
A frame with more than common strength endued, }  
Form'd by much labour and by wholesome food. }  
Most fearless when appears most cause for fear,  
No dread of danger e'er his breast came near !  
So us'd to perils, that he heeds it not  
Though thick as hail around him fly the shot,  
Whilst dying men bestrew the blood-stain'd  
deck,  
And the torn vessel floats a batter'd wreck !  
Or, though the raging elements unite  
To wage against his bark th' unequal fight ;

Calm and collected still, he stands and braves  
The lightning's glare, the thunder of the waves!  
Or, should a leak be sprung, his glee to check,  
And rising waters inundate the deck;  
He, while beneath his hands the chain-pump  
rings,  
With metre soothes his toil, and blithely sings!  
Though far remov'd from affluence and wealth,  
Yet blest, supremely blest, with boist'rous health,  
No thought of future want affects his mind;  
To all of foresight absolutely blind!  
E'en his last shilling,—to oblige a friend,  
The shilling which he wants, he'll freely lend!  
By labour strung, his nerves are iron-brac'd;  
His brawny limbs in adamant are eas'd;  
Search him minutely, and you'll find no part,  
Tender and soft,—except his gen'rous heart!  
For, though he scorns at danger to repine,  
Or tamely at Misfortune's heels to whine;  
Though varied toils have taught his brow to  
frown;—  
Yet is his breast soft as the cygnet's down!

Sueh were the erew ; and why should Britain fear,  
Though leagued, in arms, a universe appear ;  
While, in the wooden tow'rs that guard her land,  
Sueh Seamen muster, and sueh Chiefs command ?  
No ! though the Russian with the Gaul combine,  
And Swede and Dane the coalition join ;  
Though sunken Holland and Germania lie  
Prostrate on earth, in shameful apathy :  
Soon shall the furious Dane, and pliant Swede,  
For peace, with Britain humbly intercede ;  
While Russia, seeing---(haply not too late!)—  
Her own, and near-approximating fate,  
Shall, like the late enlighten'd sons of Spain,  
With Albion gladly join her pow'rs again,  
To rend the continental tyrant's chain !  
And thou, my well-lov'd eountry ! ever keep  
Thy title to th' aseendant on the deep ;  
Still bear the crimson flag of war unfurl'd,  
Till Gallie fraud is driven from the world !

But who is he—O muse discover!—who ?  
Yon little urchin, rigg'd in vesture blue ?

Snatch, snatch a moment, and the time employ  
To celebrate the little Cabin-Boy :  
Who, in life's early morn, ere yet his breast  
By aught of good or evil was impress'd,  
Learn'd through the vast and trackless deep to roam ;  
The sea his country, and a ship his home !  
Permit my verse, ye ever-tuneful maids  
Who wander through Pieria's vocal shades,  
(Ere yet the ship distends the swelling sail)  
The stripling's little hist'ry to detail.

Nigh where the British Tigris\* swiftly pours  
His silver streams betwixt eneroaching shores ;  
Sweeping, resistless, in his ample train,  
The spoils of earth to Neptune's wide domain ;  
Young Idas first inhal'd the vital air,  
And, like a flow'ret, grew and blossom'd there,  
The rich and varied prospects that adorn  
The beauteous country where the youth was born ;—

---

\* The River *Dart*. The Arabic word, *Tigris*, is of the same import, and both rivers derive their names from their velocity.

The wooded hill; the semilunar bay,  
Where oft, secure, extensive navies lay;  
The mould'ring castle, tott'ring to the blast;  
Th' expanded main, magnificent and vast!  
Gave his young mind that soft romantic glow  
Which minds of innocence alone can know.  
Born with a thirst for books, 'twas all his joy  
Those hours in serious reading to employ,  
Which his young schoolmates, with a mind more  
gay,

But less serene, employ'd in sports and play:  
And oft the saffron dawn beheld him stand,  
In meditation wrapt, on Clifton's strand,  
Whence, with a throbbing heart, he gaz'd around,  
Far as the spreading ocean's utmost bound;  
And wish'd, and long'd, to plough that ocean  
o'er,

Of other realms the wonders to explore.  
For he had read—and well his mind retain'd  
The blissful theme—of lands where pleasure reign'd:  
Of Crusoc's island, and the rock-bound spot  
Where Philip Quarl had hewn his lonely grot.



And, thinking all the pleasing tale was true,  
(For yet his heart no form of fiction knew)  
Much he desir'd those fav'rite scenes to hail,  
That flourish'd in the dear seductive tale.

'Tis said that oncc, resolv'd to go afloat,  
He from the beach launch'd forth a little boat,  
Without an oar to row, or helm to steer,  
And let her drift away, devoid of fear;  
Till, night advancing, o'er the rapid tide  
Far from the haven's mouth he saw her glide,  
Whilst rising gusts of wind began to blow,  
And in commotion lash the waves below!  
Then first he felt a sense of danger rise,  
And the loud blast was strengthen'd with his sighs;  
Till, dimly seen amidst the boiling foam,  
Some worthy fishermen, returning home,  
His peril mark'd; down to his rescue bore,  
And kindly brought the wand'rer to the shore!

His sire, on land his every prospect cross'd,  
His plans defeated, and his labours lost;



---

Left his lov'd home, where long, in vain, he strove  
To rear four pledges of connubial love,  
And, sighing, hied him to the faithless main,  
In hopes a mod'rate competence to gain,  
Idas, who long had panted to behold  
The fairy scenes in fiction's page enroll'd;  
Found his resistless eloquence prevail,  
And gain'd the high-priz'd boon, with him to sail.

The crew were muster'd; all on board were  
found  
For duty fit; prime steady men, and sound:  
Now, rang'd according to their sev'ral skill,  
The various parts of duty they fulfil.  
Those who, long us'd to brave the sea and wind,  
The theory with practice have combin'd;  
Have learn'd to reef, or hand, the flowing sail;  
To steer the headstrong ship when storms prevail;  
To splice; to knot; and do besides whate'er  
Falls in the compass of the seaman's sphere;  
Are with subaltern privileges grac'd,  
And o'er divisions of the crew are plac'd.

---

Those who by harbour-duty have attain'd  
Some knowledge of the skill on ocean gain'd;  
And those who ne'er have heard the billows roar,  
(Now first advent'ring from their native shore;)   
Such stations fill, of humbler rank and use,  
As best may to the gen'ral good conduce.

Why should the muse a dull detail essay,  
And register the toils of ev'ry day;  
The various labours of the crew rehearse,  
And turn the pages of the log to verse?  
Rather suppose a few brief weeks have fled,  
Since from the dock the lofty ship was led;  
And that the floating bulwark now we find  
Prepar'd to brave the ocean and the wind;  
The meteor-flag of victory to wave,  
And hurl opposers in a briny grave.

Behold her, then, in all respects equipp'd!  
Her rigging up, sails bent, provisions shipp'd.  
Her sturdy masts, like pines, aspiring high,  
Menace the clouds, that sail reluctant by.

With geometrical preeision squar'd,  
On either side projects the sable yard.  
The ropes, coin'd down, in pleasing order lie;  
No yarn, misplac'd, offends the nicest eye.  
Order, unrivall'd, reigns; nor aught is seen,  
Above, below, but what is fair and clean:  
No spot the penetrating glance has 'scap'd;  
The sides are painted, and the decks are scrap'd.  
Survey her, now, with scrutinizing eye;  
To ev'ry part the microscope apply;  
And say, when well you've view'd the vessel  
round,

Where, on the earth or ocean, can be found,  
Of all the labours which by man are wrought  
A work, which can to match with her be  
brought?

The proudest edifice that ever grac'd  
Athens, so long the paragon of taste;  
The richest car that e'er imperial Rome  
Prepar'd, to bring her chiefs in triumph home;  
The stoutest castle, frowning o'er the main,  
By waves and tempests long assail'd in vain;

---

Lose all their lustre, dwindle to a star,  
Amidst the blaze that decks the BRITISH MAN-  
OF-WAR!

Observe with what a gently-rising swell  
Her bows are form'd, rude billows to repel:  
Hence the huge cable, oft, with thund'ring  
    sound,  
Follows the massy anchor to the ground;  
The anchor! valued friend, when tempests roar,  
And billows lash the breaker-skirted shore!  
What though, amidst the ridge-arising waves,  
The demon of the storm infuriate raves;  
And tyrant winds, whose pow'r no art can check,  
Essay to make the lofty ship a wreck:  
Loos'd from the bow, the anchor cleaves the  
    foam;  
The faithful cable follows to his home;  
Buried beneath the ground, unmov'd he lies,  
And all the efforts of the storm defies.  
The cable then by stoppers well made fast,  
The lab'ring vessel safely braves the blast!

---

Behold that lofty stern ; how grand ! how gay !  
Where strength and beauty all their charms display ;  
See story after story sweetly rise,  
Reflecting from the wave the solar dies,  
Light gall'ries, pendent o'er the sea, afford  
A grateful promenade to those on board ;  
Who, thence, with pleasure, at their ease explore  
The various beauties of the neighb'ring shore.  
Here oft, at eve, the gallant chiefs repair,  
And cast aside the yoke of daily care,  
Whilst, seated at their rest, they feast the eye  
With ev'ry busy scene that flutters by.  
Yet often, when, at sea the tempest pours  
Prone on the helpless bark its deadly stores,  
Those charming walks, that now appear so fair,  
Excite on board a more than common care ;  
For, should a billow, tow'ring to the sky,  
In whose deep womb a hundred ships might lie ;  
Fall dreadful on the quiv'ring vessel's rear ;  
'Too soon the fairy scene would disappear ;  
Whilst, washing fore and aft, the pond'rous wave,  
Involv'd the whole in one promiscuous grave !

---

So, oft, the pleasure, which, with care and pain,  
And loss of ease and health we strive to gain,  
But opes a portal to succeeding woe,  
Through which the waves of cureless ruin flow!

Lo! here, by massy chains and hooks made fast,  
The pond'rous rudder stands; erect and vast!  
Extending wider as it deeper goes,  
Like some huge gate the solid fabric shows.  
By this th' experienc'd helmsman, to his will  
Directs th' obedient prow. Whether his skill  
To right or left would change the vessel's course,  
He guides the rudder, and she owns its force.  
How like the steady statesman! in whose hand  
Repose the destinies of some great land!  
But ah! when perils press, and storms appear,  
Should in experienc'd hands, unskill'd to steer,  
Usurp the helm; soon on Destruction's coast,  
(Her energies destroy'd, her powers lost,)  
The found'ring realm with horrid crash is tost!  
Grant, gracious Heav'n! to time's remotest date,  
That such may never prove my country's fate!



The copper sheath with which her base is deck'd,  
Design'd that ample portion to protect  
From filth, and weeds, and all the noxious train,  
To shipping dang'rous, which infest the main;  
Unsullied yet, with tawny radiance brave,  
Bespeaks the ship of war, and burns along the wave!  
Her ebon wales, projecting from the side,  
Shed a dark lustre o'er the polish'd tide.  
Her sides, which ev'ry trace of firmness bear,  
A bright and martial yellow aspeet wear;  
Where, at due intervals, in grim display,  
Three tiers of cannon frown in dread array;  
Like chargers, when the trumpet sounds afar,  
They ope their mouths, impatient for the war.

High o'er the figur'd stern, a thousand ways,  
The flaunting ensign with the zephyr plays;  
Whilst the long pendant, from the mainmast head,  
Pourtrays the scourge that Britain's rivals dread!

Yet, ere she sails to vindicate her name,  
And pluck from Vict'ry's soil the plant of fame;



---

The royal bounty and advance of pay  
Amongst the crew shall life and mirth convey.  
The day is come: and ev'ry man is seen  
Clad in his stainless suit, all neat and clean.  
Labour relaxes: pleasure crowns their toil,  
And ev'ry countenance assumes a smile.  
Thick swarming from the shore, on either side  
Innum'rous boats dance o'er the cockling tide;  
Throng'd with the train who on a ship depend;  
A catalogue that scarcely knows an end!  
Parents and children, sisters, friends, and wives,  
Croud to the side, and éach for entrance strives;  
Once more of all their dear concerns to tell,  
To take a parting kiss, and cry farewell!  
Here courtezans display their loathsome charms,  
And press the tar to take them to his arms;  
With brazen front, by blushes unallay'd,  
Boldly they drive their vile nefarious trade!  
And see! the simple tars with wanton eyes,  
Survey the boat, and each selects his prize.  
A fatal prize! A melancholy gain!  
A short-liv'd pleasure, for an age of pain!

Ah me! that, snar'd by man's insidious wiles,  
A British fair, on whose enchanting smiles  
Once rapture dwelt; should now, in open day,  
Her person sell, and smile but to betray!  
Curs'd be the villain, who by fraud or force  
First turn'd her thoughts to such a desp'rate  
course;

Raz'd Virtue's consolations from her mind;  
Then, cruel as the wolf, or false as wind,  
To want and shame the outcast wretch consign'd!

The fiend who stoops to act so base a part,—  
Truth on his tongue, but treason in his heart!  
Be he, like her, he ruin'd, doom'd to roam,  
Abandon'd, friendless, and without a home!  
Too ardent grows my verse? Alas! these eyes  
Have mark'd the ills which from such crimes arise;  
Have seen the female shed the frantic tear,  
Lamenting all that innocence holds dear!  
Have view'd the aged parents, bow'd by grief,  
(Grief exquisite, admitting no relief!)  
Descending to the grave, with accents wild,  
Calling for vengeance for their ruin'd child!

O! that the mournful truths that mark my page,  
Might stamp their pow'r on this abandon'd age;  
Might of the sons of pleasure win the ear,  
And stop the sensual in his mad career!  
Let these sad lines with such a pow'r be blest,  
And to oblivion Time may hurl the rest!

What various sorts the motley group compose!  
Lo! other boats lie off in broken rows,  
Freighted with pedlars, slopmen, taylors, Jews,  
Whose eager looks the witty tars amuse;  
Waiting the chief's permission to repair  
On board the ship, and vend their cargoes there.  
Not greater crouds the lab'ring ocean press'd  
When, led by Courage, and of Truth in quest,  
Great Cooke's advent'rous vessel plow'd the sea  
That lav'd the fertile shores of Owhyhee.

The word is giv'n!—No sooner spreads the sound,  
Than all the little fleet the ship surround;  
And, by the readiest means the tars afford  
Hoist up their wares, and lodge themselves on board.

While modest females, fill'd with fears and hopes,  
Step doubtfully, and tightly grasp the ropes;  
Those who the ship attend in search of gain,  
Inactive cannot patiently remain;  
But, through the port-holes, or where'er they find  
A friendly avenue, they turn and wind;  
Happy, howe'er by jealous rivals curs'd,  
If on the deck they find a landing first.

So, when long drought has parch'd the thirsty  
soil,  
And threats to blight the patient peasant's toil;  
Should fav'ring Heav'n bestow the grateful show'r;  
Soon as the clouds their liquid treasures pour,  
The various reptiles who infest the sod,  
Quit their parch'd dwellings in the mould'ring  
clod,  
And, with new vigour instantly endu'd,  
Fold their long trains, and revel in the flood!

The hurry ended, and the shore-boats clear,  
Soon rows of shops along the deck appear,

And the gay ship presents as fair a treat  
As ever lin'd the sides of Moumouth Street.  
The duly-distanc'd cannon mark the bounds  
Where each advent'rer his emporium founds;  
Where the poor sailor, if he list, may find,  
At highest price, though lowest of their kind,  
Food to indulge the body and the mind.  
Knives, watches, buckles, ribbons, trinkets, toys;  
Whate'er can captivate or men or boys.  
Here tawdry loekets tempt the honest youth  
To send a kind memento of his truth,  
To that fair maid, for whose dear sake he braves  
The heavy buffets both of wars and wayes.

Amongst the rest who on that busy day  
On board the stately vessel found their way,  
Was one to Idas' bosom ever dear,  
Whose cheering voice was music to his ear;—  
His honour'd mother! She, with aching heart  
Had come to see the lofty ship depart;  
Her husband's name an easy passport prov'd,  
To bring her to the twain whom most she lov'd.

With them retiring, freely she gives vent  
To all a parent's fancy can present,  
And, when she meditates on what may come,  
Fondly she wishes to retain him home.  
A world of fears within her bosom rise;  
The soul's soft workings vent themselves in sighs, }  
Or find a mournful passage at her eyes.  
Trifles and toys she gave,—a valu'd store!—  
Her means were small, else had the sum been  
more;

Med'cines and cordials, should disease invade,  
And lead him to require their genial aid.  
All these she gave, then from her store she drew  
The Book whose pages fiends with terror view;  
“Take this, my child,” she cried, “and ere we  
part,  
“With this one promise soothe a mother's heart,  
“Each day some little portion to assign  
“To these blest leaves, of light and truth divine!  
“Should pain or sickness,—which may Heav'n  
forbid!”—

(And as she spoke a tear enrich'd the lid!)



“ Should grief or trouble e’er thy feelings wound,  
“ Herein a sov’reign remedy is found.  
“ Remember HIM, whom unexampled love  
“ Drew from the shining realms of bliss above ;  
“ Who as a child himself deign’d to appear,  
“ And oft blest children while he sojourn’d here,  
“ Invoke him daily, on his grace depend ;  
“ And may his blessing all thy steps attend !”

She said ; and sudden floods of gushing tears  
Reliev’d her breast, and calm’d, awhile, her fears ;  
Her tears with pain the grateful stripling saw ;  
The holy Book he took with sacred awe,  
And in a locker safely stow’d away  
The sacred treasure for a future day.

But hark ! a gun ! The unexpected sound  
Startles each ear, whilst o’er the blue profound  
The smoke, slow rising, spreads a misty veil,  
Whose spreading skirts the lofty ship conceal ;  
But blown, at length, in fragments to the skies,  
Lo ! at the topmast-head Blue-Peter flies !



Swift o'er the deck the busy boatswain goes,  
And his shrill call at ev'ry hatchway blows :  
"*All hands unmoor !*" aloud at each he cries,  
"*All hands unmoor !*" each ready mate replies.  
Rous'd by the sound, on deck the seamen swarm,  
For *music* can the rudest bosom charm !  
And, near the capstan, lo ! a motley band  
Of naval minstrels take their noisy stand !  
The crew whose hands the plane and chissel  
    guide,  
Fix the huge levers in the capstan's side.  
Deep in the hold, secluded far from day,  
Some seamen coil the pond'rous rope away.  
Hark ! hark ! the rugged melody I hear !  
The piercing fife assails my shrinking ear ;  
The creaking fiddle, and the bagpipe's drone,  
Which pours its sorrows in a mono-tone !  
The drum crowns all ; and to its leaden beat,  
The crew keep time with deck-destroying feet !

Now straining o'er the heavy capstan-bars,  
Pant the broad bosoms of the hardy tars.

---

Th' unwilling anchor, as inclin'd to stay  
Amidst the flood, long keeps their pow'rs at bay;  
Till, by the efforts of superior strength  
With perseverance leagued, he feels at length  
His hold give way; and with a sudden bound  
He springs, with fury, from the oozy ground:  
As when a tiger, in some narrow den  
Entrench'd, would fain elude the search of men;  
Constrain'd, at last, leaps from his dark retreat,  
Death in his eye, and terror at his feet;  
So, by th' elastic cable, from his bed  
Drawn forth, the anchor is a captive led:  
The joyous seamen feel the easy strain  
And to the bows they run him up amain.  
And now, aloft they climb, with nimble feet,  
And, at a signal giv'n, each tawny sheet  
Is from its ebon roller wide unfurl'd,  
To urge the vessel through the wat'ry world.  
The decks of all their fin'ry next they clear,  
And slòps and shops and pedlars disappear.  
The dearest ties of nature, doom'd to part,  
Find griefs, reciprocal, oppress their heart.

And, ere by cruel fate awhile estrang'd,  
Full many a mutual vow was interchang'd ;  
Whilst, glist'ning on the deck, full many a tear,  
Witness'd the mutual vow to be sincere.  
The gangway Idas' mother now ascends,  
And in departure o'er the side she bends ;  
And he, who hitherto had borne his part  
With all the calmness of a Stoic's heart ;  
Feels nature's tender workings now arise,  
And artless tears stand trembling in his eyes.  
She, while her sorrows trickle down her face,  
Enclasps him in a warm, a last embrace ;  
" Farewell !" she cries, " I can no longer stay,  
" The boats put off, and I must haste away ;  
" Farewell !—O Heaven ! hear a mother's pray'r,  
" And to her heart her darling offspring spare !"  
She could no more ; but, fraught with tender woe,  
Descends the side, with trembling step and slow,  
Still on the deck the sobbing Idas stands,  
And answers with his tears her waving hands ;  
Long time he follows her with straining eyes,  
And, as the distance gains, fresh sobs arise ;

Till the projection of a cruel shore  
Conceals the boat, and Idas sees no more !

The vessel now the breeze begins to feel,  
And rends the waters with her trackless keel ;  
Whilst the poor tars, to ease their am'rous  
smart,

Engage in duty with an eager heart.

The topsails sheeted home, the sheets made fast,  
They hoist the yards along the slipp'ry mast ;  
Topgallant sails and courses next display'd,  
To intercept the breezes, lend their aid.

Their friendly aid her quicken'd pace declares ;  
O'er the smooth wave, impell'd by gentle airs,  
She glides majestic ; whilst the sparkling tide  
Delighted, rises, to salute her side.

How grand the sight ! Her colours, fair and gay,  
Stream to the lightsome breeze in wanton play ;  
Whilst, with a gentle curve, the swelling sail  
Rises, with soft emotion, to the gale.

The blooming figure that adorns her prow,  
Sheds fresher verdure o'er the waves below,

And, to the beauties of her sumptuous stern,  
The sportive floods in am'rous pursuit turn.  
Charm'd by the view, around, on either side,  
Barges and yachts skim o'er the rippling tide;  
Whilst, on the neighb'ring hills, a gazing throng,  
Behold in rapture where she glides along.  
O'er the fresh air brisk martial music floats,  
And Echo, pleas'd, prolongs the cheerful notes.  
Methinks Britannia on the shore I view,  
Invoking blessings on the ship and crew.  
"Go, gallant bark!" she says, or seems to say,  
"Go, and assert my universal sway."  
"In conscious greatness plow my ocean o'er,  
"And let thy thunders shake each hostile shore;  
"Till, on the base of public faith uprear'd,  
"(By all requested as to all endear'd)  
"Fair Peace again display her ev'ry charm,  
"From foul Injustice wrung, by Virtue's giant-  
arm!"

END OF BOOK II.





**BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

**BOOK III.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*Dangers of Navigation in the early Ages.—Voyage of Ulysses, contrasted with the arduous Performances of British Seamen.—Evening.—Night.—Morning.—Washing Decks.—Other Duties detailed.—Breakfast.—Employment of the Crew.—Exercising great Guns and small Arms.—A Gale.—Awful Appearance of the Elements.—The Gale moderates.—A dead Calm.—Saturday Night.—Sailors carousing.—Sunday.—Naval Church.—Magnificence of the Scene.—Address to the Sceptic.—Return to England.—Arrival at Portsmouth.—Signal for a Pilot.—Mode of working a Ship into Harbour.—Saluting.—Anchoring.—The Ship moored.*

---



THE CRUISE





# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK III.

### *The Cruise.*

**BOLD** was the man who with advent'rous hand  
First steer'd his fragile vessel from the land ;  
And, spite of storms and billows, bade her keep  
Her even course across the swelling deep ;  
(Tremendous deep ! in whose capacious womb  
So many heroes since have found a tomb !)  
Methinks I see him standing from the shore,  
While gath'ring crowds the rash attempt deplore,  
Deeming full sure, to see his face no more ;  
Whilst o'er the bosom of the main he glides,  
The wonder of the waves his keel divides !  
Ev'n Homer's lyre of never-dying fame,  
From age to age has handed down the name

Of him\* who merely near a guiding coast  
From isle to isle convey'd his wand'ring host;  
And, after many years of peril past,  
In Ithaca's lov'd port arriv'd at last.  
The literati of the world too long  
Have hung, beguil'd, on Greek or Roman song;  
But why should we abroad for prowess roam,  
Who find such brighter instances at home?  
Had British Tars the Greecian vessel steer'd,  
The task, which then so perilous appear'd  
Had dwindled to a pastime; and those seas  
Their keels had plow'd in one short month with  
ease!

Where, o'er the bow the lordly bowsprit bends,  
And the jib-boom its further length extends;  
A net, with meshes of enormous size,  
Slung like a hammock, in the midway lies,  
Design'd to hold that sail,† whose friendly pow'r  
Assists the helm to turn the wayward prore,

---

\* Ulysses.

† The fore-top-mast-stay-sail.



When, press'd by tempests, in a heavy sea,  
The wallowing ship will scarce its force obey.

That sail, now climbing to the topmast head,  
Had empty left his large and rugged bed ;  
There Idas wander'd out, with tott'ring feet,  
And in its lap he finds a safe retreat,  
Where, free from bustle and the seamens' noise,  
The thought of home his busy mind employs.

Now Eve's dim veil the less'ning landscape  
    shrouds,  
And sheds a sable tincture o'er the clouds ;  
Idas beholds, with sad and straining eyes,  
The hills diminish and the vapours rise ;  
Darker and darker grow the gath'ring shades,  
And, in imperfect forms the landscape fades.  
Still the fond boy will fancy he perceives  
Some well-known spot ; against his sense believes  
The dear delusion ; clasps it to his heart,—  
The only balm to soothe its bitter smart.

Apollo now had left th' empyreal plain,  
And bath'd his coursers in the western main;  
And o'er the gloomy face of solemn night  
The silver moon stream'd forth a chasten'd light.  
A thousand diamonds, glitt'ring in the sky,  
Upwards, adoring, drew th' enraptur'd eye;  
And seem'd, almost, to Reason's ear, to sound  
Their Maker's praises through the blue profound.  
Eight bells had struck; the primal watch was set,  
And at their stations due the seamen met.  
The sails reduc'd; with mild and easy sway  
Through the vast deep the vessel takes her way.  
Across the wave the breeze blew fresh and cold,  
And warn'd the youth to quit his fav'rite hold;  
Compell'd at length, he o'er the bowsprit past,  
And on the fore-castle arrives at last;  
Thence (cold and sad) with mournful step and slow  
The hatch he gains, and finds his way below.  
There, as the timbers creak from side to side  
In mournful dissonance, whilst o'er the tide  
The vessel slowly rolls; he sighs a pray'r:  
The last sad effort to relieve his care!

Then in his little hammoek turns to weep,  
Till o'er his senses leaden slumbers ereep.

Next morning with the sun the urchin rose,  
And, anxious, on the fore-eastle he goes,  
To try, if, haply, o'er th' expanded main,  
He yet a glimpse of Britain ean obtain.  
But ah! in vain he strains his flinching eye;  
No sight of land the pensive youth ean spy;  
But wat'ry mists deeeive the aching sight,  
And azure clouds with azure waves unite.  
A cold sensation cress'd his swelling heart;  
Now from his native home so far apart;  
To Heav'n he rais'd his sorrow-moisten'd eye,  
And eas'd his bosom in a long-drawn sigh!

But hark! the boatswain pipes. Young Idas  
hears  
The piercing note with wonder-waiting ears:  
"*All hands, ahoy!*" Such sounds all sleep ex-  
plode,  
And roar along the submarine abode,

Where snoring tars, in deepest sleep reclin'd,  
Dream of the joys they lately left behind.  
Rous'd from their slumbers at the well-known call,  
Scaree half awake, they from their hammocks fall;  
Whilst down the hatchway falls a cloudy ray,  
That serves to shew the op'ning eye of day.  
Soon dress'd, the sailors to the deck repair,  
And, patient, wait the call of duty there,

'Tis now four bells. A new and mighty din  
Is heard; to wash the decks the crew begin.  
While some around the pumps await their spell,  
To raise th' abstergent fluid from the well;  
Others from buckets sluice it far and wide,  
Till all the deck imbibes the briny tide.  
The wond'ring Idas marks, with childish stare,  
The hardy tars, from knee to ankle bare,  
As in the water unconcern'd they stand,  
And pass the buckets with a nimble hand.  
While some with brooms and brushes shew their  
pow'r,  
Others with sand and stone the timbers scour:

---

Till, all appearing cleanly to the eye,  
With well-wrung swabs the lengthen'd floor they dry.

This task achiev'd, the ever busy crew,  
Below retiring, other toils pursue.  
Their pendent couches, close together bound,  
And by strong lanyards tightly girded round,  
They o'er their shoulders sling, and wait to hear  
The sound of "*Up all hammocks!*" greet the ear;  
Then mount the ladders; stow their beds away,  
And thus commence the labours of the day.

And now to breakfast: Still the boatswains' call  
Predominates, and gives a life to all.  
Like some fond bird—(ah, simile! to strike  
So justly here; in all besides unlike!)  
With "*twit, twit, twit,*" he calls his mates around,  
And "*twit, twit, twit,*" their silver pipes resound.  
And now the piercing whistle, strong and clear,  
Breathes the shrill note that charms the seaman's ear,  
Who, o'er a brimming bowl of hot *burgoo*,  
Prepares his daily vigour to renew.

Lo! round the dish that bears the fatt'ning mess,  
With wooden spoons uprais'd, like sharks they  
press ;

And, whilst a *fid* of butter, melting fast,  
On either side streams down the *rich* repast,  
(Like the bright lava which from Etna's brow  
Smoking descends amidst the plains below)  
With keenest appetite the Britons eat  
The homely meal, nor wish a better treat.

Whilst thus the tars on frugal fare regale,  
And with their food indulge the cheerful tale ;  
The officers, with greater lux'ries stor'd,  
Enjoy th' advantages of shore on board.  
Aft in the Ward-Room, which bulk-heads divide,  
And sep'rate keep from all the ship beside ;  
The tea's fair equipage in order lies,  
And bread, in butter'd heaps, salutes the eyes ;  
Whilst 'neath some feast's remains the table groans,  
And clatt'ring knives contend with massy bones.  
He who unmov'd would sit, and hear the jokes  
And nautic droll'ry which the scene provokes—



---

Droll'ry, of which a seaman's mouth is full—  
Like Socrates, should stop his ears with wool.

Refection's pause elaps'd, again the call  
Disperses to their tasks both great and small.  
To work up junk the unskill'd seamen learn,  
Or at the winches *grind* it into yarn.  
In making sennet this his task pursues;  
Whilst that is twisting nettles for his clews.  
Others, to give the stomach due relief,  
Run to the coppers with their greens and beef;  
But so unsightly, often, is the mess  
Which these Apicii for their comrades dress,  
That grumbling tars exclaim, with furious looks,  
“Heav'n sends us meat, but Satan sends the cooks!”  
So time rolls on, till cheerful *seven bells*  
The scene of bus'ness instantly dispels,  
Sweepers with brooms along the deck are seen,  
Whose arduous efforts soon the whole make clean.

So, in a playhouse, when, to drive away  
The virtuous moral of some serious play,

The motley-coated gentleman reveals  
Such *wit* as flows from *nimble hands and heels*;  
Beneath the touches of his magic wand,  
Continual changes mark the scenic land;  
Mile-stones to men start up with wond'rous ease;  
Jails change to gardens; pillars turn to trees.

Whilst cruising thus, the watchful chief com-  
mands

To train the younger inexperience'd hands,  
With credit and exactness to perform  
The various tactics of the fight or storm;  
And let the writhing foes of Britain tell  
Whether her hardy sons perform them well!  
The weather, fine; the ship, with easy sail,  
Gliding along before the gentle gale;  
A fit occasion now before them lies  
The black artillery to exercise.  
“*All hands to quarters!*” Up the hatchway run  
The ready crew, and stand around each gun.  
Here, in the midst, the gunner takes his stand,  
And through the sounding trumpet gives command.

---

"*Silence!*" he cries: extinet is ev'ry sound:

"*Stand to your quarters!*" close they gather round.

"*Cast loose your tackles!*" straight the ropes that  
bind

The iron war-dog, leave him unconfin'd.

"*Take out your tompins!*"—from his iron jaw

The wooden gag their nimble fingers draw:

"*Run in your guns!*" The ever-watchful tars

Foree him on board by ropes and massy bars:

"*Load it with cartridge!*" On the word 'tis  
done,

And shot and wadding feed the hungry gun:

"*Ram home your wad and shot!*" The rammers  
sound,

And "*home!*" they go, with many a hearty bound.

"*Run out your guns!*"—with tackles large and  
strong,

They urge the death-dispensing tube along;

Some empty hogshead, with a flag display'd,

Is at a distance from the ship convey'd;

At this the seamen take their even aim,

And hurl the bullet forth in smoke and flame!

While thus a portion of the crew attain  
The art of gaining conquests on the main;  
Some on the quarter-deck, with muskets  
learn

The soldier's various duties, in their turn.  
Fix'd to the fore-yard arm the target stands,  
Where circle upon circle wide expands;  
Here, in succession, their address they try,  
To pierce the centre of the white *bull's eye*;  
He who this honourable boast attains,  
A double share of grog requites his pains.

So they their time employ, till practice long  
Has taught expertness to the gallant throng.  
Meanwhile, according as the breezes veer,  
The vessel's course is urg'd by those who steer;  
And, as the breezes flatten or prevail,  
They set or furl the ever-changing sail.

Thus Noon to Morn, and Eve to Noon suc-  
ceeds,  
And in her train, reluctant Night she leads.

Again the bell struck eight ; before the gale  
The vessel gently drove with easy sail :  
And, whilst the second watch their vigils keep,  
The first and third enjoy refreshing sleep.

The infant morning now began to rise,  
And chase the sable monarch from the skies ;  
And, stealing off beneath the cloak of night,  
The twinkling host retir'd in broken flight.  
The blust'ring wind aloud began to rave,  
And brush the feath'ry foam from off the wave,  
Each wave in anger rais'd his booming head,  
And roar'd revenge, in accents loud and dread.

The ship, between conflicting forces scourg'd,  
Is o'er, or through, the mountain-billows urg'd.  
Now, high she spins along the boiling wave ;  
Now, plunging, seems to seek a wat'ry grave.  
Like some fierce bull, by mastiffs kept at bay,  
She tosses from her bows the foamy spray.  
The bowsprit quivers at the mighty strain,  
And cleaves, with furious blows, the rebel main.

---

The steady crew, to ease the groaning mast,  
That bends and cries before the vengeful blast,  
Reduce the sails, by various means confin'd,  
And point the yards direct against the wind;  
Whilst, like a maniac, o'er the plashing tide,  
She plunges, dips, and rolls from side to side.

Young Idas, sick and languid, seeks the deck,  
Now strew'd with cordage like some broken wreck;  
The fore-castle's lov'd haunt he strives to gain,  
But scarce his slipp'ry footing can retain.  
There, loathing food, with vacant eye he sees  
The flying tackle, and the sparkling seas.  
Amaz'd he marks the sullen murky hue  
Which o'er the scooping waves the tempest  
threw,  
Save where the snowy foam bestreak'd the main,  
Like stripes of ermine on a sable train.  
The hardy tars, by practice well inur'd  
To scenes so common, toils so oft endur'd,  
Laugh at the stripling as he vents his sighs,  
And magnify the dangers that arise.



---

Of springing leaks, of dangers in the well,  
And found'ring ships, th' astonish'd youth they  
tell,

Who, in a melancholy stupor hears  
The dismal tale, that but augments his fears.

At length the elements forget their rage;  
The winds decay, the rolling waves assuage;  
Till ev'ry symptom of the tempest past,  
A still and peaceful calm succeeds at last.  
Smooth as a mirror lies the polish'd deep;  
And, folded in the sails, the zephyrs sleep.  
The ship, bereft of locomotive pow'r,  
Arrested stands,—a huge tremendous tow'r!  
With vacant visage, o'er the side reclin'd,  
The listless seaman whistles for a wind.  
From point to point, in lagging chase pursued,  
The ship's tall bowsprit turns around the flood,  
But turns in vain; in vain they strive to find  
The smallest token of a breath of wind;  
The vanes stand fix'd. The sails, erect and vast,  
Flap carelessly against the lofty mast.

The radiant sun, now sinking in the west,  
With sloping beam, the clouds in crimson drest;  
And all the main, effulgent to behold,  
Glow'd as a spacious sheet of burnish'd gold!  
Till solemn Eve, array'd in sober grey,  
On Phœbus' car had clos'd the gates of day,  
And the pale fires which Night commands to glow,  
Reflected, sparkled in the waves below.  
And now, the toilsome week with mirth to close,  
And usher in the morning of repose;  
Around the embers of the galley-fire,  
For song and glee the cheerful tars retire.  
There, while the cordial grog goes gaily round,  
And recent trouble in the bowl is drown'd,  
Again they fight their former battles o'er,  
Or drink to those, belov'd, they left on shore.  
Alternately the laugh and jest prevail,  
And now the song is heard, and now the tale.  
Hark! with a voice that stuns the deafen'd ear,  
Whose rugged notes 'twere agony to hear,  
Stentorophontus (best such name may suit  
The man whose voice out-yells the fiercest brute)

With mouth extended, roars the rough-spun lay  
That paints the perils of some fierce affray.  
Rough bellowing quavers hang on ev'ry note,  
As if a top-chain rattled in his throat ;  
Whilst in the chorus all the seamen join,  
And pay the songster in his proper coin.  
Anon, a tar, whose destiny severe,  
For music gave him neither voice nor ear ;  
To furnish out his quota of delight,  
Begins some wond'rous story to recite,  
Of goblins, sprites, and all the horrid crew  
That ever fear conceiv'd, or terror knew ;  
Whilst, with attentive ear, the seamen round,  
Hang on his lips in silence most profound.

So flies the time, till now th' extinguish'd fire  
Warns them on other bus'ness to retire ;  
The warning they receive, and soon they go,  
Those to their watch, and these to rest below.

And now arose the ever-sacred day  
When mortals join their solemn suit to pay

---

To Him whose love and mercy know no bounds ;  
Whose ample goodness all his works surrounds.  
The morning duty done with strictest care,  
For worship's solemn hour the crew prepare ;  
From stem to stern no other sight is seen  
Than one grand preparation to be clean.  
The open chests upon their lids display  
The seaman's decent wardrobe, neat and gay ;  
And, either side, the length'ning decks assume  
The semblance of a playhouse-dressing-room.  
Whilst, with a naval fin'ry they prepare,  
In decent guise t' attend the place of pray'r.

But hark ! the drowsy bell, deep-tolling,  
slow,  
Calls up the ready seamen from below !  
Whilst the sad summons of its note to aid,  
The boatswain's mates the lower deck parade.  
From ev'ry hatchway thick the crew arise,  
As mists exhaling 'neath autumnal skies,  
And to the quarter-deck in crowds they press ;  
Alike in manners as alike in dress.

There, in a mute attention standing round,  
While ev'ry hum in rev'rent awe is drown'd,  
They wait th' arrival of the holy guide,  
Who teaches safe through life's bleak seas to ride.  
Aft in the midst the well-lov'd Chief is seen,  
Commanding awe and rev'rence by his mien;  
The officers, arrang'd in order due,  
Set a bright pattern to th' observing crew.  
Now, from behind a chair, which to the eyes  
The office of a reading-desk supplies,  
The pious teacher of the Holy Art,  
From Truth's fair leaves unfolds the sacred chart,  
By which, when earthly storms and cares are past,  
They anchor in the port of Heav'n at last.  
With words judicious, and with reas'ning clear,  
He captivates the all-attentive ear,  
Whose mazy channels to the busy brain  
Convey the lesson, practical and plain.  
At stated intervals the seamen join  
In accents audible, the rites divine;  
And now, upborne on Faith's triumphant wings,—  
(A pleasing off'ring to the King of kings!)

Their ardent pray'rs, their solemn songs arise,  
And find a welcome passage through the skies!  
Impressive sight! What though no sculptur'd wall  
The mem'ry of departed worth recall;  
What though no organ, swelling strong and clear,  
Direct the voice, and charm th' enraptur'd  
ear;

What though no costly choir, no fretted dome,  
No massy pillar, no expensive tomb;  
No pane with heraldry's fair records bright,  
Shed o'er their heads its awe-inspiring light:—  
More noble monuments invest them round  
Than e'er within the fairest church were found;  
And to their sacred services is giv'n  
The rich, resplendent canopy of Heav'n;  
Where even Reason's self might learn to trace  
The hand of Him whose goodness fills all space!

Thou coward sceptic! who, in falsehood bold,  
Derids't the sacred truths by scripture told,  
With blushless front presuming to deny  
Facts clear as noon to Faith's enlighten'd eye;



Affirming Revelation's wond'rous scheme,  
No better than a brain-distemper'd dream ;—  
Come here, and learn, thou self-deluding fool!  
A wiser creed in Danger's rigid school.  
Though thou, well fortified, and safe, on shore,  
Canst scorn the truths thou never didst explore ;  
Hadst thou, with those who here their vigils keep,  
Survey'd the wonders of the mighty deep ;  
Then would thy shrinking mind, with fear o'eraw'd,  
Trembling, have own'd the being of a God!  
At his command the stormy winds arise,  
And lift the whirling billows to the skies!  
Again he speaks ;—the stormy winds subside,  
And to a mirror sinks th' obedient tide!  
Hadst thou, blind man! the brunt of battle borne  
And seen thy batter'd ship in fragments torn :  
Or, 'neath a noxious elime, at ev'ry breath  
Inhal'd the pestilential air of death ;—  
Then hadst thou known how fair Religion cheers  
The heart surrounded with a world of fears—  
(Haply thy own had felt the vital flame!)—  
And own'd that from the courts of Heav'n it came

The service ended, dinner waits their rest,  
And solid puddings solid truths digest.  
The day's last half in various ways they spend,  
According as their dispositions bend ;  
In varied reading, some their time employ,  
Others the cheering thoughts of home enjoy.  
Till sober Night, descending o'er the deep,  
Apportions some to watch, and some to sleep.

And now, slow rising o'er the slumb'ring sea,  
The grateful breezes on the waters play ;  
The sails again distend with easy swell,  
And through the rippling waves the ship im-  
pel.  
To England they direct th' obedient prore,  
And soon appears her bold and chalky shore.  
Like some fine cloud betwixt the sea and sky  
It looks, when first its bearings they descry ;  
But, nearer drawing, they with pleasure view,  
Objects which well each skilful seaman knew.  
Coasting along, distinctly now they trace  
Dorsetia's hills, and Portland's rocky Race ;

These objects soon retiring in their rear,  
Around St. Alban's hoary head they steer;  
And, proudly rising to th' admiring sight,  
They mark the fair and fertile Isle of Wight.  
High at the fore-top-gal'-mast's lofty head  
The gaudy union to the breeze is spread,  
That asks a pilot, and a cannon's roar  
Proclaims their wishes to the neighb'ring shore.  
He comes, attentive, and with skilful hand  
Conduets the vessel to th' indented land,  
And, as the channel or the changing wind  
Require, the vessel's bowsprit is inclin'd;  
And ever-and-anon, with watchful eyes,  
" *Luff!*" or " *No near!*" the wary coaster cries;  
Whilst from the chains an able seaman flings  
The sounding lead, and oft and loud he sings.  
Now, off and on, beneath a gentle gale,  
The pliant vessel seuds with easy sail;  
" *Ready about!*" the pilot roars aloud:  
Straight to their posts the willing sailors crowd;  
The helm put down, and fasten'd hard a-lee,  
Turns her bold front across the sparkling sea.

"*The helm's a-lee!*" the sage director cries,—  
Swift through the rattling sheave the fore-sheet  
flies ;

Whilst, spinning round against the steady wind,  
Her foremost sails hang trembling, unconfin'd.

"*Raise the fore-tack!*"—It rises at the word ;  
And, half clew'd up, the sail hangs o'er the board.  
"*Main-topsail haul!*" 'tis done ; with thund'ring  
sound

They brace the main and mizen yards around ;  
"*Let go, and haul!*"—round flies each forward  
wing ;

The boatswain pipes ; the rattling pulleys ring !  
Brac'd on the other tack, with easy way,  
She makes her passage through the bubbling spray.

At length, approaching closer to the shore,  
The harbour's varied prospects they explore ;  
Where the old guard-ship safe at anchor lies,  
From whose tall mast the Adm'ral's banner flies.  
Their tubes of wonder, heretofore so mute,  
Now ope their mouths to pour the loud salute ;

---

In fire they speak; the long-resounding roar  
Rolls up the hills, and dies along the shore;  
Whilst lofty piles of curling vapours shroud  
The stately vessel, in a dusky cloud.  
They shorten sail; sedate she moves, and slow;  
“*Stand clear from off the cable there below!*”  
The pilot cries; th’ attentive seamen hear,  
And straight a mingled sound ascends: “*All clear!*”  
“*Let go the anchor!*”—With tremendous sound  
The massy engine cleaves the dark profound,  
And through the hawse the rattling cable flies,  
Till, buried in the bottom, firm it lies.  
And now their sails they furl; the decks they clear,  
Hoist out the boats, which up the harbour steer;  
Whilst, by the diligence of those on board,  
Secure and firm the princely ship is moor’d.





**BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

**BOOK IV.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*Junction of the Grand Fleet.—Their Sailing.—Arrival off the French Coast.—French Fleet discovered at Anchor.—Various Schemes practised by the British Fleet to draw them out.—Remarks on the Conduct of the French in avoiding an Engagement.—The Grand Fleet separate, and range along the Coast.—Operation of cutting out a Ship by Night, inscribed to the Blockaders.—Difficulty of the Enterprize.—A stormy Night.—The Boats upset.—Presence of Mind displayed by the Adventurers.—The Prize brought out.—Specimen of Nautic Wit.—Escape of the French Fleet.—The British Fleet re-assemble.—Consultation of the Commanders.*

---







# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK IV.

### The Blockade.

IN Portsmouth lay a large and gallant fleet,  
Design'd the naval strength of France to meet;  
Compos'd of ships whose strong and lofty walls  
Had often tow'r'd victorious o'er the Gauls.  
These, mann'd and stor'd, were shortly now to go,  
Again to launch their thunders on the foe;  
With them the BRITISH OAK was doom'd to bear  
The perils and the glories of the war.  
Not long they wait; the signal soon is made;  
The sails are loos'd, the branching anchors weigh'd,  
And soon the mighty armament is seen,  
Stretching to sea with bold and stately mien.

---

Soon Albion's chalky headlands disappear,  
As straight for Gallia's hostile shores they steer;  
And o'er the burden'd wave, in dread array,  
The gallant squadron hold their even way.  
The coast they made; and, in the spacious  
port,  
Secur'd by castle, battery, and fort,  
They 'spied the ships of France, who quiet lay,  
Nor sought the honours of the fierce affray;  
Preferring far a sound uninjur'd frame,  
To all th' uncertain blandishments of Fame!

Various and subtle schemes the chieftain bold  
Essay'd to lure the Frenchmen from their hold;  
And as a cat, whom fav'rite taints entice,  
Watches, with patience, the marauding mice;  
And, day and night, before the victims' hold  
Sits fix'd; unmov'd by hunger and by cold:  
So did the British fleet each means essay  
To draw abroad their sure-devoted prey.  
Now they divide, and of their ships, but few  
Remain within the Gallic leader's view:



---

The rest, drawn off, with easy sail retire,  
Till numbers shall with confidence inspire  
Their cool opponent, and his vessels guide,  
Secure of vict'ry, from the castle's side.

This feint successful;—Britain's chief outright  
Defies the foe to venture to the fight:  
Urges each plea which might have pow'r to charm  
A heart with love of fame and honour warm;  
And all that wit and courage can devise,  
To win compliance, eagerly he tries.  
But useless all. By sad experience taught  
A British foe to value as they ought;  
The Franes\* appear unmov'd with deadly ire;—  
For who, once burnt, again will handle fire?

Yet fancy not the muse's sportive lay  
As *cowards* would the enemy pourtray:

---

\* *Gallia*, being conquered by a tribe of Germans, called *Frances*, in the 5th century, who settled themselves in that country, the use of this epithet, (though novel in this restricted sense) is perfectly justifiable.

Candour and truth her song shall ever shew,  
And render justice, even to a foe.  
Let venal hirelings scatter low abuse,  
And ev'ry virtue for a vice traduce ;  
The gen'rous muse a course so vile disdains,  
Nor envies she the herd their sordid gains.  
Yet true it is,—and with a patriot swell  
Her breast dilates, the pleasing fact to tell,—  
Though half of Europe's legions have, in vain,  
Combin'd to check their arbitrary reign ;  
Where'er the sons of Britain have been found,  
That spot to France has e'er prov'd fatal ground ;  
While with fresh wreaths the British arms were  
crown'd.

Let Cressy, Poictiers, Agincourt, declare  
What kind of men the former Britons were ;  
And let the wond'ring Continent avow  
The temper and the skill of Britons now.  
E'en to the foes themselves would she appeal,  
If pride did not the humbling truth conceal,  
Whether they would not rather far engage  
The Russ or Austrian, in their hottest rage ;

---

Than, with a British foe in conflict meet,  
Whose end is foul confusion and defeat.  
But chief on ocean is this shyness seen ;  
Nor all th' attempts to raise the French marine,  
Can make them, with a willing bosom, steer,  
Where England's ships in equal force appear.  
The gallant islanders—a noble throng!  
To certain victory accustom'd long,  
Pant for the combat which to them decrees,  
By right renew'd, the lordship of the seas.  
The doubtful Gauls, who never could obtain  
By equal fight, a triumph on the main ;  
Much rather strive the contest to evade  
Which o'er their honours draws a deeper shade.

Tir'd by long waiting for the lurking foe,  
Whose chiefs no measures of resentment shew,  
The British fleet, at length, in parties rent,  
Straggle along the coast with one consent.  
Yet not so far remov'd, but should they find  
The enemy to venture forth inclin'd,

---

They soon—(the Heav'ns permitting)—could unite,  
Form the dread line, and wage the bloody fight.

Now, standing off and on, with easy sail,  
The BRITISH OAK enjoys the fav'ring gale.  
Alternately towards the land she hies,  
To find if any bark, in any guise,  
Be stealing by, (her crew, of terrors full)  
As whining puppies pass an angry bull;  
Then, like a lion o'er the Lybian plain,  
She dashes outward to the sea again.  
The enemy to harrass and annoy,  
(So run the orders—*burn, sink, and destroy,*)  
This her great object; this her sole employ! }  
Whether—(a sight so grateful to the tar!)  
He pours his host in some huge man-of-war;  
Or,—more congenial to his kind—appears  
In swarms of petty, *thievish*, privateers;  
Or (*rara avis!*) in a merchant's guise,  
He chances to salute their gladden'd eyes:  
One expectation only fills the breast,—  
Of honour and a prize to be possess'd!

Ye gallant seamen ! who by practice know  
What 'tis to watch the motions of the foe ;  
Who oft, whilst cruising near a hostile shore,  
Have heard the surges o'er the breakers roar ;  
And, whilst ye closely urg'd the smart blockade,  
By storms blown on, or treach'rous calms betray'd,  
Have found yourselves in some dire nook em-  
bay'd ;

Accept the honest, though unpolish'd, strain,  
Which to a nation strives to paint the pain,  
The toil and danger of the stormy main !

Now Eve advances. Straight to Gallia's coast,  
Like some true sentinel upon his post,  
The ship returns, and there, beneath the land,  
The crooked anchor makes his bed in sand :  
Or, should the anchorage be deem'd unsound,  
And sunken rocks the guardian cables wound,  
With gentle course she ranges near the shore,  
Intent each passing object to explore :  
And wheresoe'er, beneath the shade of night,  
Some skulking vessel tries to veil her flight ;

There, with a more than lover's speed, she flies,  
And claims the trembling captive as her prize.

One night, according to the wonted mode;  
The ship had anchor'd in the open road,  
Not far from where, within a shel't'ring bay  
With batt'ries lin'd, a Gallic vessel lay.  
The British tars, with cager-looking eyes,  
Had fix'd upon the stranger as their prize;  
And for the moment long'd when they should go,  
And from his ambush drag the cow'ring foe;  
Unmindful of the obstacles that lay,  
To intercept them in their dang'rous way,—  
Unus'd to thought, but all with zeal possess'd,  
Th' approaching capture, only, fires their breast.

Now silent night, in vestments dull and sad,  
Had all the objects of creation clad;  
And, on th' adjacent shore, both man and beast,  
Reliev'd from labour, lay absorpt in rest,  
All but the centinel, whose watchful tread  
Along the glaxis, sounded low and dead.



Chill was the piercing wind ; no voice, no sound,  
To break the slumber of the hour was found.  
High on a cliff, amidst the haze of night,  
The lofty watch-tow'r flung a troubled light.  
All things conspiring ; now, with ravish'd ears,  
The word to *man the boats* each sailor hears,  
And soon, with glowing hearts, and hands well arm'd,  
With gen'rous volunteers the gangway swarm'd ;  
All anxious to assume the noble boast,  
In danger's hour to claim the foremost post.

In either boat a brave lieutenant went,  
Their hearts on deeds of bold achievement bent,  
Whose presenee there might due respect obtain,  
And headstrong valour's impetus restrain.

" *Put off the boats!*" the daring leader cries,  
On whom devolv'd the perilous emprise ;  
And instantly towards the distant shore  
They turn their course, and bend the muffled oar.\*

---

\* In such expeditions as those here described, it is customary to tie rags round that part of the oar which lies on the side of the boat, to prevent its making a noise in rowing.

Along the deck their brave companions press,  
And join to wish the hardy crew success ;  
Whilst they, with unabated vigour, keep  
Their dang'rous course across the stormy deep.

And now the ship, beneath the cloak of night  
Receding slow, had dwindled from their sight ;  
Nor of the land, nor prize, the faintest view  
Cheer'd the brave bosom of th' advent'rous crew.  
A dismal waste of waters lay around ;  
And black and comfortless the Heavens frown'd :  
Chill o'er the ocean rode the cutting blast,  
And, spite of clothing, to their vitals past.  
Their hands were 'numb'd; their legs, with sitting,  
cramp'd ;  
And, by repeated waves, the boats half swamp'd ;  
Yet still, alike defying care and cold,  
O'er the bleak waves their even course they hold.  
Each cheer'd his mate, while with a sturdy stroke,  
Their bladed oars the rising billows broke ;  
Unshaken courage nerv'd the straining arm ;—  
Their limbs were frozen, but their hearts were warm !

---

Full five long miles were pass'd, and now they  
near

The object of their hopes. On board they hear  
Tumultuous voices; for the Gauls, who saw  
The gath'ring storm, with mingled dread and awe,  
Neglected no precaution that might meet  
And turn the bold adventure to defeat.  
Their boarding-nettings to the shrowds were trac'd;  
And all the crew, well-arm'd, the vessel pac'd:  
Yet as a gamester, who with anxious eye  
Surveys the motion of a spinning die,  
While Hope and Fear by turns their fronts pre-  
sent;  
Anxious they lay and waited the event.

Now, as the Britons to the haven drew,  
The wish'd-for object opens on their view;  
Fresh resolution fires the hardy band;  
Each grasps the keen-edg'd cutlass in his hand;  
With quick, strong strokes, they hurry through  
the tide,  
Expecting soon to gain the vessel's side.

But ah! deceitful fate! Across the bay  
A treach'rous bar of rocks and pebbles lay;  
O'er which the surges, with tumultuous roar,  
Foam'd horribly, and blanch'd the entrance o'er.  
Thoughtless of ill, the warlike crew advanc'd,  
And o'er the bubbling waves their vessels danc'd,  
When, 'midst the surf—(thrice horrible to tell!)  
Thrown from their bias by the mighty swell,  
They all o'erturn'd! and in the icy wave,  
Were plung'd, at once, the gen'rous and the brave!

Hurl'd in the ocean,—on a hostile coast—  
Their boats now drifted far astern, and lost;—  
What could they do?—They took no time to  
chuse;

The instant danger left no room to muse:  
'Twas yet some distance to the ship to steer,—  
The swell was heavy,—but the land was near.  
Thither (their sabres in their mouths) they hied,  
Breasting, with brawny chest, the lawless tide;  
Courage their spur, and fav'ring Heav'n their  
guide!

---

And soon, emerging from the wave their head,  
Their joyful feet the solid bottom tread.\*

Safe landed on the beach, they first essay  
To storm the battery that nearest lay;  
Lest the alarm, extending round the shore,  
Should swell their danger greater than before.  
This task achiev'd, the ever-vent'rous crew  
Launch from the beach whatever boats they view;  
And soon the Frenchmen, who had seen, with  
fear,  
The little armament approaching near;  
But breath'd more freely, when, beneath the waves,  
They deem'd the hardy crew had met their graves,—  
Found them on board! 'Twere folly to contend;  
Such dauntless courage must in conquest end;  
A gen'ral consternation strikes them all,  
And, with one accent, they for quarter call.

---

\* Those who are acquainted with our naval history will remember that events, somewhat similar to those detailed in this and the preceding page, really occurred in 1810, to some brave fellows belonging to the *Success* and *Active*.

---

The gen'rous Britons, who delight to shew  
Compassion to a supplicating foe ;  
With friendly heart their acclamations hear,  
Accept their homage, and the decks they clear.

The prize secur'd, they loose and set the sail,  
The cables cut, and straight, before the gale  
Their course direct, and soon beyond the bay  
The captive vessel bends her rapid way ;  
Yet not so fast she flies along the main,  
But that the French the hateful tidings gain :  
And now each battery began to roar,  
And shots in show'rs came hissing from the shore ;  
But, as in darkness they their vengeance threw,  
Innoxious o'er the tars the bullets flew ;  
And morn's first dawn the distant prize beheld,  
O'er gentle waves by friendly winds impell'd ;  
Safe from the foes, who now her course discern,  
Safe from their balls, which harmless drop astern,

Now soon arrive the heroes with their prize,  
To where the BRITISH OAK at anchor lies,



---

Their comrades wonder much to hear them tell  
The unexpected changes that befel;  
Yet laugh to think, how when their heads they  
    rear'd,  
With swords adorn'd, and through the surges  
    steer'd;  
Like spritsail-yarded dog-fish they appear'd!\*

Due order taken, and the prize, well mann'd,  
Directed to the captors' native land;  
Again the ship her massy anchor weighs;  
Again her stately hull the helm obeys,  
And, like a giant, rising from his sleep,  
She strides along the quick-retiring deep.

---

\* It is a common cruelty, practised by sailors and fishermen, when they catch a *dog-fish* (*catulus marinus*) a species of shark—to thrust a stick crosswise through his head, and cast him into the water again;—this they call “*Spritsail-yarding* him.” (See Glossary.) By this means his immerging is prevented, and he lies and dies on the surface of the water in great agony. Sailors absurdly imagine that the contortions of the expiring animal will have the effect of frightening away the rest of the species from the spot, and render their piscatory labours more successful!

But lo! a sail attracts the seamens' eyes,  
And at her gaff the British ensign flies;  
Swiftly she speeds along, on outstretch'd wings,  
As if intelligence of weight she brings.  
They close; they hail; and now the seamen  
learn,  
With looks of mingled wonder and concern,  
The Gallie fleet's escape! When off the coast  
The British ships by gales adverse were toss'd;  
Beneath the cover of a starless night,  
They ventur'd forth; and darkness veil'd their  
flight!  
A glance of indignation and surprize  
Shot from the orbit of each seaman's eyes,  
And deeply they regret th' auspicious chance  
That favour'd thus the dark designs of France.  
"*Aloft, make sail!*" the gallant Leader cries,—  
Aloft, direct, each active seaman hies:  
From ev'ry yard they loose the ample sail,  
And give its whole dimensions to the gale.  
And, as a bear, by wild resentment stung,  
When, in her absence, plunder'd of her young;

So flew the ship before the driving blast,  
And billows prostrate fell, as furiously she past!

Thus, swiftly sailing, soon again they join  
Th' assembling fleet, and all their strength combine.

The Adm'ral's masts the mystic signals bear,  
Which bid the gallant Chiefs assemble there.  
The after-sails brac'd round against the breeze,—  
The vessels stand arrested on the seas.

The painted barges from the skids they throw;  
And o'er the deep, to measur'd strokes and  
slow,

With skilful hands, the dext'rous seamen row.

The sturdy boatswain on the gangway stands;  
The sides-men's scarlet ropes invite their hands:

And soon the deck they gain, in bright array,

Then to the sumptuous cabin take their way.

There, in close council, and in solemn state,

In consultations deep the chiefs debate;

And each, his ripen'd judgment's mellow stores,

To benefit th' important meeting, pours.

Away ye Grecian Princes! humbled crew!  
Your tarnish'd glories dwindle from the view.  
What competition can your councils boast,  
When gath'ring round old Ilion's hapless coast,  
With those which now Britannia's Chiefs engage,  
Whose purpose shall astound each future age?  
Simply to raze a petty town YE meet;  
THESE, for their object, have the full defeat  
Of Gallia's strongest prop,—her only fleet!

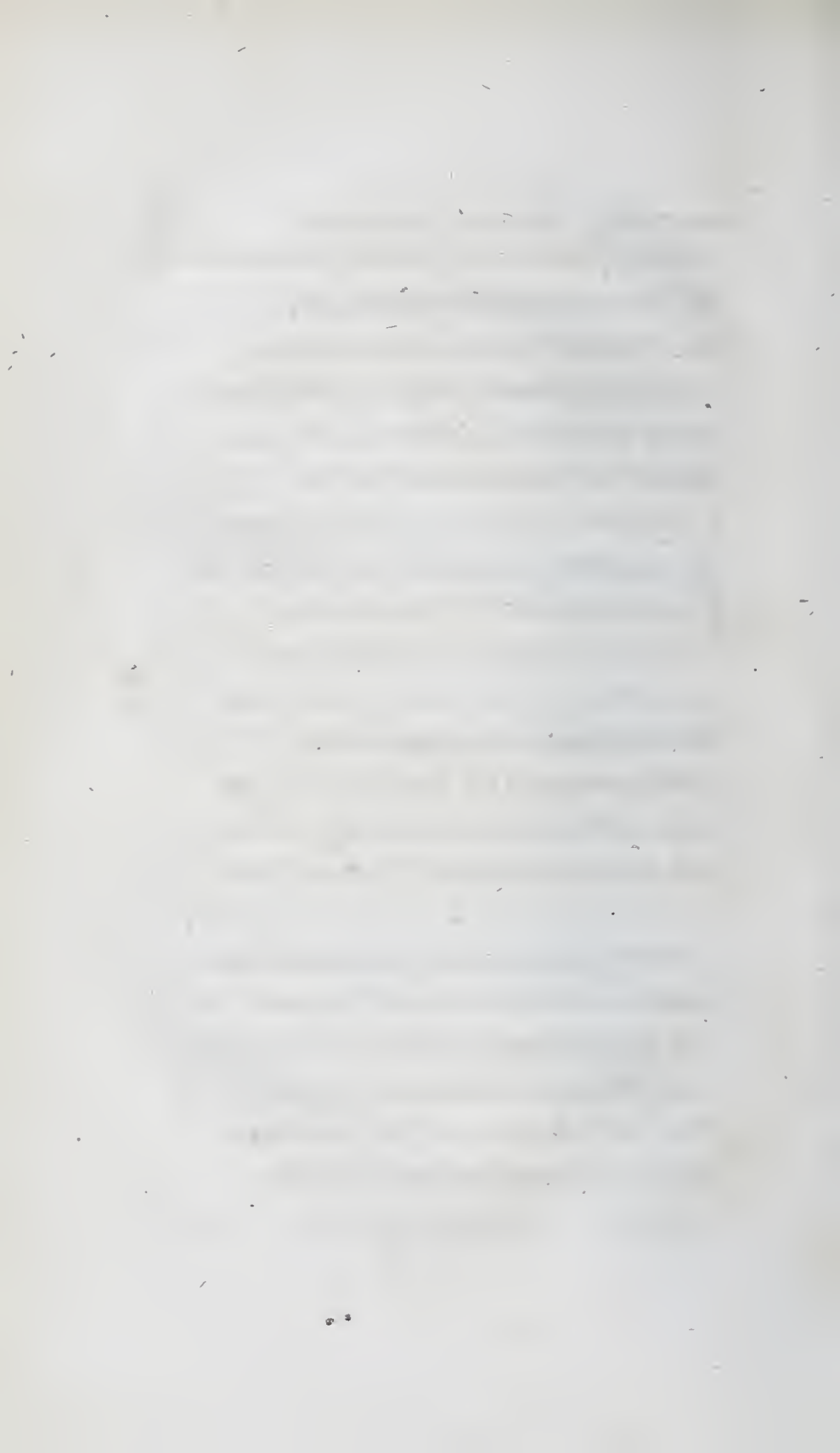
Yet where direct their course? Where turn the  
    prore;  
What ports examine, or what seas explore?  
'Tis all conjecture. Nothing clear is found;  
Darkling they tread on supposition's ground.  
At length, concluding that the hostile force  
Might for the Western Ind direct their course;  
There they resolve to steer, in dread array,  
And through the vast Atlantic urge their way.

The consultation drawing to an end,  
Again the deck the prudent Chiefs ascend.

---

The officers, in studied neatness gay,  
Their sumptuous uniforms abroad display ;  
The bold marines stand rang'd in martial line,  
And to the sun their polish'd muskets shine.  
And, as the visitors descend the side,  
And their trim barges cross the rippling tide,  
The boatswain's pipe again, with honours due,  
Tells the departure of th' illustrious crew.  
The finny oars upright and steady stand,  
Well balanc'd by the seamen's skilful hand ;  
Till, at a signal, o'er th' indented side,  
With simultaneous fall, they cleave the tide.  
Like stately swans the vessels skim the wave,  
And ocean smiles their swelling bows to lave.

Arriv'd on board, again the sidesmen wait,  
The honour'd warriors to receive in state.  
And now, the boats secur'd, the turning sail  
Again invites the freedoms of the gale ;  
While the tall stems aside the waters throw,  
And parting surges murmur as they flow.





# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

BOOK V.

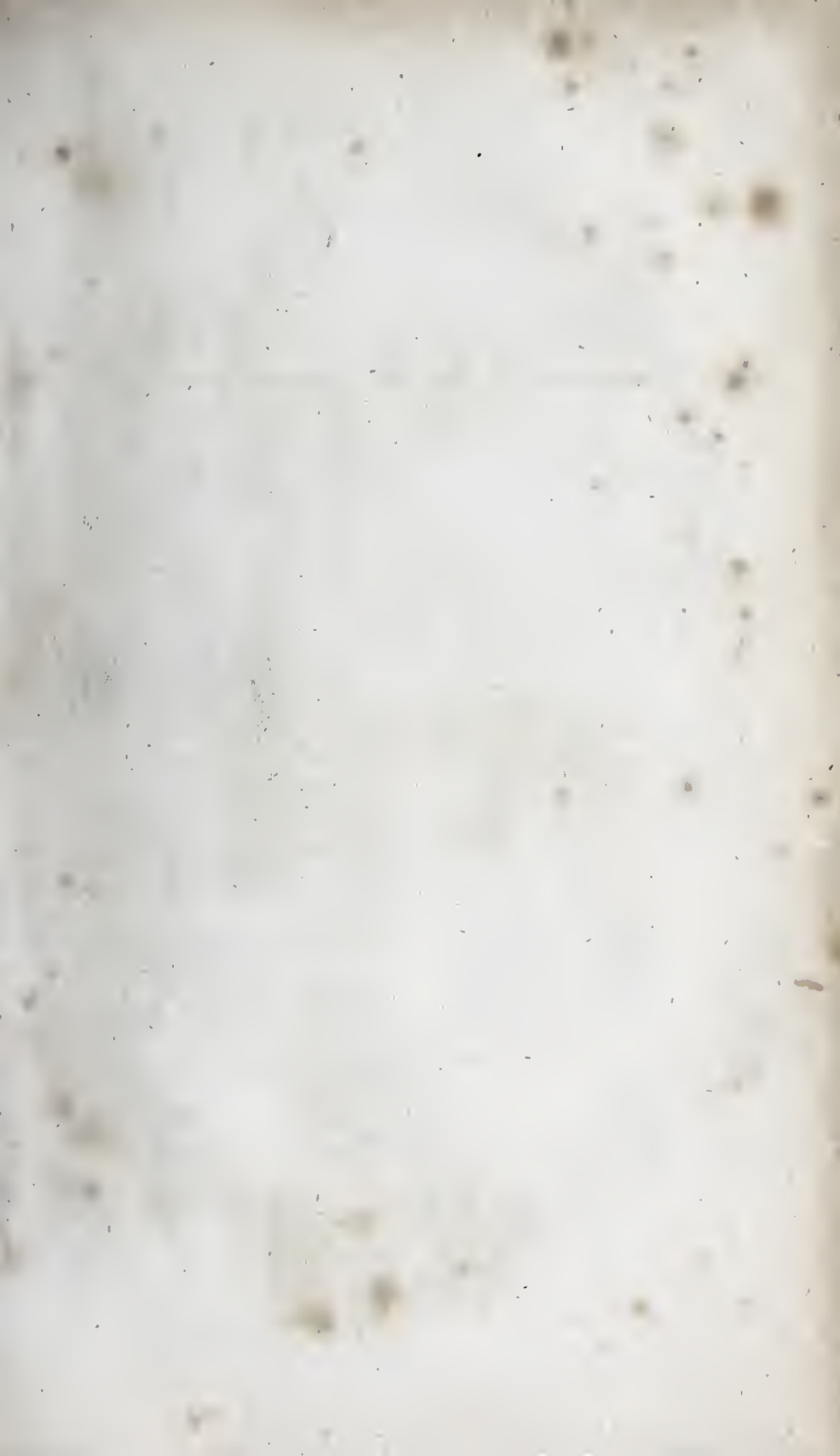
---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*The whole Fleet described under full Sail.—Their tremendous Appearance.—A Sail descried.—Homeward-bound Convoy.—Address to Britain on her Commerce.—The Fleets separate.—Evening.—Ceremonies on crossing the Tropic of Cancer.—Arrival in the West Indies.—Idas, (the Cabin Boy) a Poet.—Indian Scenery.—Mode of catching Sharks.—Jonah.—Reflections on the Slave-Trade.*

---



THE CHASE



# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK V.

### The Chase.

NOW every sail that can assistance lend  
On board each ship the lab'ring tars distend,  
As rang'd in triple lines (a dreadful throng!)  
O'er the blue ocean's breast they skim along.  
On either side the lofty stud-sail flings  
Auxiliar helps, and decks the ship with wings.  
Whilst the exalted royals, tow'ring high,  
Appear to claim acquaintance with the sky;  
And, up and down, the burthen-bearing mast  
Bends and repines beneath a weight so vast;  
As, steering large before the steady breeze,  
The fleet tremendous cuts the lab'ring seas.



So o'er the waves the pride of Britain flew,  
Like lions rous'd ;—as fleet, as dreadful too!  
First down the northern coast of France they urge  
Their swift career, and storm the saucy surge;  
Thence they explore the fertile shores of Spain,  
Then dash, advent'rous, further to the main.

Now in Biscaya's Bay the fleet is found,  
Whose depth no navigator e'er could sound;  
And, as the gale adverse or prosp'rous blows,  
The sails' broad petals they dilate or close.

Long time, far off from land, the vessels trac'd  
The deep blue surface of the wat'ry waste,  
And each succeeding morn but brought to light  
Ocean and sky, which blend again at night;  
When, as they swiftly o'er the ocean sped,  
And frighted nereids swift before them fled;  
“*A sail a-head!*” the watchful seaman cries!—  
Swift through the ship the joyful tidings flies;  
The crew are all on deck, intent to greet,  
With warm salute, the long-expected fleet.



*"Another sail!"* th' exulting seamen cry!  
Another and another meets the eye;  
And others follow, till the sea a-head  
Is all with white-wing'd vessels overspread.  
Then fell the seamen's looks! for well they knew  
No fleet, but some large convoy met their view.  
Soon in their midst the lofty war-ships steer,  
Whose flags, display'd, assuage the merchants' fear;  
For such they were; from Western India bound,  
Laden with produce for the British ground.  
A-head, astern, and rang'd on either side,  
Frigates, and smaller ships, protecting glide:  
And all the spacious ocean's azure vest  
With tawny hulls and milky sails is drest.

Fair was the sky, and gentle was the breeze;  
Which, passing sidelong, serv'd each fleet with  
ease

To steer a diff'rent course. The hues of Heav'n  
A lighter tincture to the waves had giv'n;  
And, 'round on ev'ry side, in splendid show,  
The sails display'd their heaving breasts of snow.

So thick, so white, the num'rous barks were seen,  
They look'd like sheep on some extended green;  
Whilst, like true shepherds' dogs, on either side,  
The watchful convoy-ships in order ride;  
Quicken the tardy, and the rash withhold,  
And bring the stragglers closer to the fold;  
Whilst wolvish privateers they scare away,  
Who, 'neath the cloak of night, go roaming for  
their prey.

Grand was the sight! to Britain truly great:  
Here lay her strong right arm,—her warlike  
fleet;  
Surly and stern, along the wave they pass'd,  
And ocean labour'd 'neath a weight so vast.  
Upheld by those, her left was here display'd,  
Where all th' advantages of busy trade  
Gave that importance to her lofty reign,  
Which other nations strive to crush in vain.

Hail, highly-favour'd Britain! Queen of Isles!  
Where Science flourishes, and Commerce smiles,

Whose lib'ral hand, on thy distinguish'd shores,  
The tribute of remōtest nations pours!  
Warm'd by the thought, my soaring genius  
flies

To where Augusta (pride of cities!) lies.  
There she beholds, with patriotic glow,  
The streams of wealth that in thy bosom flow.  
Along the crowded quays and busy piers,  
What sounds of cheerful labour fill the ears!  
What groves of spiry masts salute the eye!  
What clumps of vessels o'er the river lie!  
From ev'ry clime, on bold Adventure's wing,  
The varied product of the year they bring:  
Our wants and luxuries alike they aid;  
And stamp the British Isle, the mart of trade!  
Not all the wiles, not all the force of France,  
Not all the schemes her despot can advance,  
Can cramp our commerce, whilst our squadrons  
bold

O'er all the wave supreme dominion hold.  
Safe, 'neath the shelter of their warlike sides,  
The British merchantman with pleasure glides;

Nor, whilst his brave protector courses near,  
Of France nor all her vassals feels a fear.

Now Hesper rose effulgent o'er the wave,  
And day to night sole arbitration gave;  
The moon arose, majestically slow,  
And stream'd soft lustre o'er the deep below.  
Th' admiring deep, ambitious to retain  
So fair an image on its glassy plain,  
And aw'd to silence by the silver ray,—  
Smooth as a waste of polish'd marble lay.  
Save where, around the sturdy vessels' bows,  
Rous'd by the motion of advancing prow,  
With puny rage the little waves rebel,  
And vent their fury in a gentle swell.  
Yet still the convoy's rear the warriors view,  
Who, under easy sail, their course pursue;  
Till, shrinking from the eye, 'midst gath'ring  
clouds,  
The gentle moon her silver radiance shrouds;  
No sound or sight then courts the ears or eyes,  
But all around a silent darkness lies.

So, many a day in heavy sameness pass'd,  
Each one the faithful transcript of the last;  
A dreary, long, uninteresting, round,  
Where not a glimpse of novelty was found.

And now *the Line* they cross, to tars well  
known,  
Which from the torrid parts the temp'rate zone;  
And various barb'rous rites employ their time,  
To hail their entrance on another clime.  
Fair was the day. The softly-breathing breeze  
Scarce shed a dimple o'er the polish'd seas;  
And through the deep, with slow and gradual  
pace,  
The mighty fleet pursued the hopeless chace.  
See! from the waves what wond'rous beings  
rise,  
And fill the tars with pleasure and surprize.  
Lo! here the fabled ruler of the deep,  
Who bids th' obedient billows swell or sleep,  
Is seen distinctly. Streaming from his head,  
O'er his broad back his sedgy locks are spread.

His Amphitrite, near her sov'reign's side,  
Pursues her passage through the yielding tide.\*  
No coral car their majesties sustain;  
No prancing coursers, through the liquid plain, }  
As lightning fleet, convey the nautic train;  
No massy trident Neptune's hand adorns;  
No sportive Tritons sound their twisted horns:  
Neptune a batter'd speaking-trumpet wields  
Sole emblem of command on ocean's fields;  
And now, with accents boisterous and gruff,  
He hails the lofty ship in language rough;  
Demands the vessel's and the captain's name,  
What king they serve; where bound, and whence  
they came.  
These questions solv'd,—emerging from the tide,  
The wat'ry ruler climbs the vessel's side;

---

\* In order to render this and the subsequent passages intelligible to those who are unacquainted with the Navy, it may be necessary to inform them that Neptune and Amphitrite are personated by two of the tallest seamen, and best swimmers, in the ship; and that their attendants are selected by the *lowness* of their stature. Their preparations are carefully kept secret from the *uninitiated*, until the ceremony begins.



---

Attended by his whole aquatic train,  
Who, with their sire, the narrow gangway gain.  
“*Disgusting crew!*” So Idas thinks; yet fears  
To let his thoughts approach the monsters’ ears;  
Lest, rous’d to fury, not to be subdued,  
They hurl the helpless stripling in the flood.  
Their skins were dark and swarthy to the view,  
Bestreak’d with savage paintings, red and blue :  
Treenails for truncheons in their hands they  
bore;  
And turbans, made of dirty sheep-skins, wore.  
Their whole appearance, to the stranger’s sight,  
A mixture seem’d, of oddness and affright.

Now o’er the decks the whole procession go,  
And wide around the briny torrents throw;  
In ev’ry corner of the ship they pry,  
Nor can the cabins ’scape their curious eye.  
Till, having view’d whate’er they wish to see,  
Surveying all with mingled pomp and glee,  
With friendly wishes to the crew and ship,  
Again they plunge within the flashing deep.

Now, woeful is his lot, who ne'er before  
Across the line some friendly vessel bore !  
So rude a discipline the rest prepare,  
As scarce the strongest stamina could bear.  
With jagged iron-hoops his face they mar,  
Drench him with water ; plaster him with tar !  
Muse ! draw the veil, or throw thy pencil by,  
Such exhibitions but offend the eye ;  
Enough it is, in gen'ral strains to tell,  
The various changes which the crew befell.

Still o'er the bosom of th' Atlantic deep  
Their even course the gallant squadrons keep ;  
Whilst, on the cross-trees, straining far his  
eye,  
The watchful seaman tries some shore to spy.  
And now, a flock of birds, blown off from land,  
Bespeak the long-sought object near at hand.  
The tars accept the sign ; and, drawing near,  
Shortly the Virgin Islands' heads appear ;  
And soon, expanding o'er the gentle breeze,  
Their soft perfume regales the smiling seas.

What boots to tell what isles the vessels past,  
What channels plow'd, or whence they voyag'd last?  
Suffice to say, each isolated shore  
Whose cliffs, of France, the hated streamers  
bore,

They trac'd around, while gently-breathing gales  
Swell'd the dimensions of the spreading sails.  
As one, who, wand'ring in a darksome way,  
Where, check'd by various bars, his journey lay,  
Conveys his wealth; when to his grief and cost,  
He finds the richest of his treasure lost,  
Returns with aching heart, and anxious mind,  
The object of solicitude to find;  
Seeks and reseeks; explores the country round,  
Where'er the least faint glimpse of hope is found:  
So Britain's sons, by hope and fear endued,  
The flying squadrons of the foe pursued.  
But vain their efforts, all their cares are vain,  
No tidings of the enemy they gain.

Now (hope extinct) they turn their lofty prores  
Towards Jamaica's rock-divided shores;

---

There, safely moor'd within Port Royal Bay,  
The crews relax the labours of the sea.

Idas, all day on deck ; all ear, all eye,  
The novel prospect of the land to spy,  
Surveys the scene ; and with retentive ears,  
Commits to memory whate'er he hears.  
Soon, round the ship, in long and rude canoes,  
Black traders with their tempting store he views ;  
Who o'er the deck their lucious treasures strew,  
And feast their eyes with a delicious shew.  
Banáanas, plantains, cocoa-nuts they spread,  
And that fair-fruit whose taste resembles bread.  
Here the huge soursop shews its green-wash'd  
skin,—  
Prickles without ;—a cooling pulp within.  
Here tawny oranges and lemons lie,  
And kindred limes salute the gazing eye.  
The pointed citron's luscious stores invite ;  
The full pomegranate ravishes the sight.  
Here that sweet cane their hands for sale expose,  
Whose juice, press'd forth, in sugar'd liquor flows ;

Whilst o'er the vessel spreads the grateful scent  
Of acrid ginger, and the hot piment.

These, and a thousand else, attract his sight,  
And oft his palate with his mind delight.  
For oft the sable natives of the isle  
Beheld the artless youth with friendly smile,  
And from their stores some valu'd present,  
gave;

More precious, as the off'ring of a slave.  
Nor less the gen'rous tars, with lib'ral hand  
Proffer'd the fairest produce of the land,  
Well recompens'd, if with his humble lay  
Their oft-repeated bounty he'd repay.  
For, even now, his labours had express'd  
The flame of poesy that warm'd his breast;  
And oft, adventurous, did he essay  
To paint his feeling in an artless lay.  
Fond stripling! Stranger to those endless rules  
Which shew the wit and folly of the schools;  
He knew not how to curb or guide the flame,  
But pour'd the simple numbers as they came.

What though his verses, free and unconfin'd,  
Display'd a faithful transcript of his mind  
Where Fancy rul'd with undivided sway,  
Nor Judgment ever check'd the flowing lay :  
What though no critic's hand improv'd or prun'd,  
Or his weak strings to juster notes attun'd ;—  
The tars, from whom alone he sought his praise,  
Hung with applause and wonder on his lays ;  
His simple strains their judgments best would  
suit,

More dear to them than soft Apollo's lute.  
Nor did he c'er, like modern poets, strive  
Beneath their comprehensions' depth to dive ;  
Or cloud the sense with metaphor ; or soar  
On fustian wings, where they could not explore.  
Such practices he left to higher bards,  
Whom fortune crowns, and public fame re-  
wards ;

Enough for him, if from the honest crew  
His simple lay the palm of honour drew.  
Yet not alone the seamen did he cheer,  
For e'en the officers would gladly hear



Each novel ditty, with approving looks,  
And well reward the song by toys and books ;  
Whilst the fresh glow of modesty would break  
In bright suffusion, o'er his burning cheek.

Ah ! happy hours ! when, all unknown to care,  
His wand'ring fancy flutter'd free as air !  
When, blest with sweet content, with health, with  
praise,  
Pleasure and innocence adorn'd his days !  
What though the surge, with far-extending  
sweep,  
Lifted its curly summit o'er the deep ;  
He in his hammock, by no fear distress'd,  
Rock'd to repose, enjoy'd seraphic rest !

Oft would the varied scene, with sweet surprize  
Enchant his mind, and fix his stedfast eyes ;  
Which now the vet'ran tar no more could warm,  
Bereft of novelty's seductive charm.  
Now swift canoes, with paddles short and strong,  
To measur'd notes of music skim along,

And oft, the sable rowers, as they time  
Their skilful strokes, their mellow voices chime.  
Now the carcharian dog,\* in quest of prey,  
With open jaws, pursues his furious way;  
Two pilot-fish, a-head, their station keep,  
Whose course directs him through the yielding  
    deep.

Him, oft, the seamen with a deal of care,  
By hook or barb'd harpoon essay to snare;  
And, such the malediction that remains  
On those who give their appetites the reins,  
Seldom they miss their aim. One sultry day,  
As near the ship so gaunt a monster lay,  
A tempting portion, of enormous size  
His pilots 'spied, and urg'd him to his prize.  
Forward he darts, as rav'nous instinct leads,—  
Now in convulsive agony he bleeds!  
By ropes, securely fasten'd, not to slip,  
They raise the hideous glutton in the ship;  
There, prone upon the deck, while now a flood  
Streams from his horrid mouth, of reeking blood;—

---

\* The Shark.—“*Canis Carcharias*.” LYCOPHRON.

---

Lashing the planks in agony severe,  
He snaps at ev'ry thing that ventures near.  
The hardy tars, with axes in their hand,  
Around the wild infuriate monster stand,  
And, with reiterated blows, divide  
Head, tail, and body; whilst the crimson tide  
Spouts forth in torrents from expiring throes,  
And through the scuppers to the ocean flows.

The savage dead; Idas, approaching near,  
Surveys his form with mingled joy and fear:  
And thinks, while on the monster's shape he pores,  
And meditates his Bible's sacred stores;  
Whether it were not such a gulph profound  
Which three long days and nights in darkness  
bound

The disobedient prophet, when he fled,  
And turn'd from Nineveh his stubborn head.\*

---

\* Idas was not singular in this opinion, though it is contrary to that which is generally received. The learned Bochart, and other eminent authors, agree, that the fish which swallowed JONAH was no other than the *Shark*.

Amongst the rest whom chance or fortune  
drew

To swell the number of the vessel's crew;  
Was one, whose birth a better prospect gave  
Than thus to toil, dependant, on the wave.  
He, in his better days, when Fortune smil'd,  
And plenteous Opulence his wants beguil'd:  
The flow'ry paths of lib'ral science knew,  
And joy'd its pleasing mazes to pursue.  
But ah!—those shining days full long had  
flown,

And black Misfortune seiz'd him as her own:  
Wave upon wave of dire distresses came,  
And only left him an unsullied name.  
Unable to withstand the potent tide  
Of mis'ries, which assail'd him ev'ry side;  
He sought not former pleasures to redeem,  
But, passive, gave him to the driving stream:  
Yet well his mind the pleasing stores retain'd,  
In academic shades by study gain'd;  
And when he bow'd beneath corroding grief,  
Their sweet remembrance oft bestow'd relief.

On Idas long he fix'd a friendly eye,  
Well pleas'd the artless workings to descry,  
Of unwrought Nature's pure simplicity;  
And often, in his mind, with much good-will,  
He sought the seeds of virtue to instil.  
Mild were his manners, though his words were  
sage,  
And kindness smooth'd the solemn truths of age.  
Idas, delighted, heard th' instructive tale,  
Grateful to him as ev'ning's balmy gale  
To fainting travellers. His friend no less  
Was pleas'd, the fallows of his soul to dress;  
And saw with exultation, in the youth,  
The op'ning buds of genius and of truth.

One day, as on the forecastle they stood,  
And Idas with a lively int'rest view'd  
The varied scene that woo'd his roving eye,—  
The fruitful land, smooth sea, and cloudless  
sky;  
Thus, to his charge, the well-instructed man,  
The lesson of philanthropy began:

“ Idas ! thine eye that rambles round the shore,  
Intent its various beauties to explore ;  
Bespeaks thy inward feelings all serene,  
And harmonizing with this pleasing scene.  
Yet know, fond youth ! those lands, which look  
so fair,  
Resound the cries of anguish and despair,  
For ah ! the demon SLAVERY is there !  
There Afric's injur'd son, by villain hands  
Dragg'd from his family and native lands,  
The yoke of despotism indignant bears,  
And steeps the arid soil with blood and tears !  
Ah, think how hard his lot ! Condemn'd to part  
With ev'ry object that delights his heart ;  
Doom'd (how unjustly !) to unceasing toil,  
To till a stern oppressor's hated soil !  
In vain, to him, the earth its tribute brings,  
The squirrel gambols, and the mock-bird sings ;  
In vain the skies a silken robe assume,  
And all creation smiles in genial bloom ;  
'Midst all the pleasing scenes his eye can find,  
What can compensate ruin'd peace of mind ?



His wife!—his children!—names for ever dear,  
For ever lost! for them he pours the tear.  
They, in the few short hours his lord bestows,  
Sacred to relaxation and repose,  
Flit through the mazes of his madd'ning brain,  
And fev'rish slumbers rack his soul with pain!  
Ah, hapless wretch! He never more shall hear  
His infants' tender prattle melt his ear;  
No more his sorrow-laden heart shall prove  
The dear delights of voluntary love!  
Alas! his offspring,—now no more his own!—  
Beneath the lash of kindred tyrants groan;  
While sickness and disease, full many a time,  
Are punish'd as the most enormous crime!”

“ Why does he to such injuries submit ? ”  
Enquired the youth. “ Why at a tyrant's feet  
Lie bound and bleeding ? Why not rather  
rise  
In all the might that conscious truth supplies;  
The tyrant's tortures on himself return,  
And nobly all the chains of slav'ry spurn ? ”

O! were my strength but equal to my will,  
How soon would I this grateful task fulfil;  
And whilst the pow'rs of Virtue nerv'd my hand,  
Sweep the foul monsters from the loathing land!"

"Thy zeal is laudable," his friend replies;  
"Thy words are nervous, and from Justice rise;  
But ah! fell slav'ry was by hell design'd  
To enervate the body and the mind!  
And he, who bow'd beneath its yoke remains,  
Fears to indulge a wish to loose his chains.  
Ah! should he dare attempt himself be free,  
And to the mountains for a refuge flee;  
Tortures so harsh the rash design await,  
Thy blood would freeze should I the whole re-  
late.

Death is the gentlest pang his fiends bestow,  
And lightest crimes full oft procure the blow—  
A happy blow! that sets the captive free,  
Consign'd (O bliss!) to Heav'n and liberty!  
But ah! more oft, the lacerating scourge  
Home to the bone his persecutors urge;

---

Or, from his mangled trunk, Oppression's whim  
Decees the axe to lop the bleeding limb!"

"Detested brutes!" the shudd'ring Idas cries,  
While fierce resentment lightens up his eyes;  
"Scarce hell itself, a retribution due  
Can make to such a more than devil-crew!  
But see! those shores my country's banners wear,  
And can the plant of slav'ry flourish *there*?  
Britons, I read, wherever known or nam'd,  
For soft humanity are justly fam'd!"

"Thou sayest well," the virtuous man replied,  
"For ever nurse this patriotic pride;  
It well becomes the race of Britain born,  
And, more than conquest, does their name adorn.  
Yet ah! I grieve to tell the tale, so true,  
So sad, that ev'ry gen'rous mind will rue,—  
E'en Britain's sons *have* shar'd the load of guilt  
For blood of innocents, unjustly spilt;  
But (thanks to Heav'n!) this horrid trade is o'er,  
And Christians deal in human flesh no more!"

---

A philanthropic few, inspir'd by Heav'n,  
(By whom the meed of fair success was giv'n)  
Dar'd slav'ry's loathsome features to display,  
And shew its horrors to the light of day :  
Nor all the machinations of the crew  
Who from that source their ill-earn'd treasures  
drew,  
Nor all the charms of int'rest could avail  
Against the plain, resistless, truth-born tale.  
Rejoice then, grateful boy ! Rejoice to learn  
That Britain's Senate heard with deep concern  
The dreadful facts : the solemn fiat pass'd  
Which bade expiring Slav'ry breathe its last."

A lively joy the stripling's looks express'd ;  
" Blest may they be !" he cries : " for ever blest ;  
Pleasure, and health, and peace, may life supply,  
And death conduct to joys that never die !"

" But still, 'tis fear'd, though Truth the day has  
gain'd,  
Not fully, yet, the object is attain'd :

---

And still, alas! defying ev'ry law  
Which Heav'n has fram'd, or human wit can draw,  
Some harden'd wretches lurk along the flood,  
Who trade in human misery and blood!"\*

"May storms and tempests on their vessels  
fall!"

The youth rejoins; "And ruin seize them all!  
By Heav'n's avenging bolts in sunder riv'n,  
Let their torn wrecks o'er whelming waves be  
driv'n;  
And, sinking fast amidst the sable storm,  
Before their frightened eyes let every form  
Of those they erst have murder'd, plain appear,  
And point them to the gulph that opens near!"

---

\* The Author, most respectfully and earnestly, begs to direct the attention of Naval Officers to the Act passed in the 46th year of the reign of his present Majesty, *For abolishing the Foreign Slave Trade*. They will find their interest as well as their humanity concerned in it, as they are entitled to a head-money of £40 for every man, £30 for every woman, and £10 for every other person under 14 years of age, who shall be taken as slaves, on board any ship clearing out from ports belonging to Britain; besides the forfeiture of the ship, her stores, and merchandize; and the heavy penalties on all those who may be concerned in her equipment, insurance, &c.

“Rather,” replied his pious mentor, “Say,  
May Heav’n arrest them on their cruel way;  
Turn their hard hearts, their dreadful deeds to  
pore,  
Bid them repent, return, and sin no more!”

“Amen,” he cries, “If such God’s pleasure be:  
But O! may ev’ry form of tyranny  
Be driven from the world; and all mankind  
The gentle cords of mutual kindness bind!”

“One thing remember,” cried his honour’d friend,  
“And may the lesson all thy steps attend;  
Hereafter, if th’ unerring will of fate  
Shall fix thy portion in a humble state;  
Midst all the griefs by which thy mind is rent,  
Think on the slave; be thankful; be content.  
Or, should propitious Providence design  
A sphere of greater honour to be thine;  
Let those good thoughts, which now thy words  
display,  
Teach thee with mildness to dispense thy sway,



So shall thy servants bless their happy lot,  
Nor in their pray'rs, their master be forgot."

He ended ; and amongst the busy crew,  
In haste, he from the thankful youth withdrew.

END OF BOOK V.



# **BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

## **BOOK VI.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*The Book opens with some Reflections on Reason and Instinct, which introduce the Arrival of the French Fleet in India, and account for their Delay.—The British put to Sea.—A Waterspout.—The French discovered in the Night.—They are again lost, in a Fog.—Impatience of the English Sailors.—The Fog increases.—Precautions to prevent the Ships from getting foul.—The Fog rises, and discovers the Enemy.—General Joy on Board the English Ships.—The Line of Battle formed.—The Drum beats to Quarters.—Description of a Ship previous to Action.—The French begin to fire.—The Fleets close.—The Engagement becomes general.—The British Flag.—The British Oak is lashed to a French Ship, whose Masts being at length carried away, her Crew call for Quarter.—Victory, being sent from Heaven to end the Contest, alights on the British Admiral's Ship.—A French Ship on Fire.—The greater Part of the Enemy surrender, and the Rest escape.—The Prizes secured.—Thanksgiving.—Elegy on the Killed.*

---







# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK VI.

### *The Action.*

SHORT-SIGHTED man, Philosophy avers,  
Oft, through the dictates of his Reason, errs;  
While brutes, with meaner Instinct for their guide,  
Are seldom from their purpose drawn aside.  
Inventive Reason knows such varied means,  
To one of which, alone, the judgment leans,  
That, 'midst the lustre of so strong a light,  
The odds is great if she adopt the right.

So chanc'd it to the pride of Britain's fleet;  
Such ardour drew them Gallia's ships to meet,  
That, in the eagerness of Honour's race,  
They overshot the objects of the chase.

The French, (as well they deem'd) with foul intent,

Their devastating course to India bent ;  
But, to elude pursuit, and blind their foes,  
A route circuitous their leader chose ;  
And thus the English, who across the deep  
Preferr'd a track direct and straight to keep,  
Had pass'd the enemy ; unknown, unview'd,  
And the pursuer was in turn pursu'd.

Nor let this circumstance the wonder draw  
Of those who ne'er the wide Atlantic saw ;  
For, so expansive is the liquid way  
O'er which the vessels' destin'd journey lay,  
That ample room affords the spreading tide  
For various navies on their course to glide,  
Nor jostle by the way. So Britons past  
The Gallic fleet, and first their anchors cast.

But now, imperial Fame the tidings bore  
Of Gallia's squadron drawing to the shore ;  
Then, with reverted trump she warn'd the Gauls,  
Where lay Britannia's dreaded wooden walls.

Rous'd by the varied messages, the fleets  
Such course pursue as best their purpose meets;  
And, while the French, retiring o'er the main  
In flight ignoble, strive their shores to gain;  
The British, eager for the fierce affray,  
Loose their wide sails; the pond'rous anchors }  
weigh,  
And, borne on fav'ring gales, stand out to sea.)

Soon, from the eye, as ev'ning veil'd the pole,  
The distant mountains' lofty summits stole;  
And, whilst innoxious fires (which ev'ry night  
Fling round th' ethereal vault their pallid light)  
Gleam'd o'er the wave; with slow and pompous gait  
The British squadrons glided on in state.

The op'ning glance of morning's saffron light,  
A grand phenomenon display'd to sight:  
Right on the leeward bow, with pleasing awe  
And wonder mix'd, the gazing seamen saw  
A congregated mass of mist and eloud,  
Circling a vast extent. Within this shroud

---

A conic tube their wond'ring eyes desery,  
Of spiral form, descending from the sky;  
And from the troubled deep, with clouds o'ereast,  
Pumping its liquid stores in torrents vast!  
Elsewhere, tranquillity possess'd the scene,  
The breeze was gentle, and the sky serene;  
But, where the sable siphon robb'd the deep,  
A wild tornado, with destructive sweep,  
Harrass'd the lab'ring elements;—the main  
In heaving billows thunder'd forth his pain:  
The low'ring sky in saddest hues was dress'd,  
And all the scene convulsive pangs express'd;  
Whilst the black pipe, full often blown aside,  
Disgorg'd its liquid plunder in the tide.  
Now, on the forecastle, with suited ear,  
A well-charg'd gun the busy tars prepare;  
And, aiming at the spout, with motion true,  
Roaring, amidst the clouds, the bullet flew.  
With horrid erash, the lofty engine rends,  
The upper fragment to the sky ascends;  
The lower portion, in a dreadful heap  
Tumbling and thund'ring, rushes to the deep:

Ocean, alarm'd, through all his channels raves,  
And dreadful undulations rock the waves ;  
Till, like an infant in its parent's breast  
Sooth'd to repose, it gently sinks to rest.

But lo ! a brighter scene salutes the eye ;  
Though Danger shades the piecc, yet Glory gilds  
the sky.

The setting sun, with splendid vermil ray,  
Had ting'd the curtains of the bed of day ;  
And, while on Thetis' lap he sunk to rest,  
A fond farewell his parting beams express'd.  
Now, unattended by a single star,  
Night rose majestic in his ebon car,  
Whilst all the world in solemn darkness lay,  
And seem'd to languish in distress for day.  
The active watch the sounding decks patrol'd,  
By warm *wrappees* well shelter'd from the cold ;  
The rest indulg'd in visionary themes,  
And wars, and conquer'd navies, fill'd their  
dreams.

Four hours had pass'd ; the second watch was set,  
And at their stations due the seamen met.  
With easy sail they still pursued their way,  
And chid the tardy morning for delay.

But hark ! what means that tumult ? Ev'ry breast  
Appears with more than wonted fire possess'd ;  
E'en the Lieutenant from the deck hath flown,  
And to the slumb'ring Chief in haste is gone.  
The starting Chief, with wonder in his eyes,  
Springs from his couch, and up the ladder flies.  
And those who next the tedious watch shall keep,  
Shake off the broken bands impos'd by sleep,  
And crowd the busy deck, alert to see  
The sight, so long desir'd,—the Gallie enemy !  
Lo ! faintly gleaming through the haze of night,  
Their bittacles emit a feeble light,  
But yet enough to Albion's sons to show  
The number and direction of the foe !  
Now all the gen'rous Britons are on fire,  
Whilst thoughts of future fame their hearts  
inspire ;



And wait, impatient, for the morning light,  
To meet their squadrons in the dreadful fight;  
Anticipating, at the close of day,  
To bear the whole to England's shores away.

Ah! little think they, ere the deed is done,  
And Vict'ry's wreath by Valour's arm is won;  
How many heroes, resolute and brave,  
Must in a billow find a moving grave;  
How many an aching heart must feel the void  
Of some dear relative or friend destroy'd!

But see! those lights another course pursue!  
Perchance the Gauls the British squadrons view,  
And turn, retiring; or their destin'd course  
May to another point direct their force.  
Whate'er it be, no moment must be lost,  
Lest once again those high-rais'd hopes be cross'd;  
And, hurl'd from expectations high and fair,  
The gallant seamen flounder in despair.  
By signals, made by various-colour'd lights,  
And known to all, amidst the darkest nights,

The British fleet, whilst glory cheers the view,  
Tack in succession, and the chace pursue.

Now morning dawn'd ; but O ! what tongue can  
tell

How Britain's crest, erewhile so lofty, fell ;  
What grief, —what disappointment,—what amaze,  
Oppress'd her sons, when now an envious haze  
(More fatal than the blackest gloom of night,)  
Veil'd all the Gallic squadron from their sight !  
Nor they alone ;—ev'n all the British fleet  
Are shrouded by th' impenetrable sheet,  
And their vicinity alone can tell  
By constant sounding on the sullen bell,  
Whose heavy accent warns each ship to keep  
At proper distance on the vap'ry deep.  
A gen'ral burst of fury and despair,  
From ev'ry mouth, oppress'd the heavy air ;  
And all that disappointment can suggest,  
Flow'd from their lips, and prey'd upon their breast !  
With heavy heart, and sad and downcast eye,  
The seaman treads the deck ; while many a sigh

And many an execration, find a vent  
From the full treasure of his discontent!

Still o'er the main the heavy vapour lies,  
Concealing all things from the vacant eyes;  
And, through the misty veil, the lamp of day  
Emits a faint, portentous, sanguine ray.  
Still the dull bell, with sad and lazy sound,  
And constant tolling, fills the air around;  
And, like a flock of sheep, the seamen hear  
The sullen note, and by its accents steer.

Now ev'ning clos'd. A gentle rising breeze,  
In part remov'd th' incumb'rance from the  
seas,  
And serv'd to shew the British fleet alone  
In order due; but all the foe unknown.  
Yet ere the primal watch to rest had gone,  
Again the breeze decay'd, the haze came on;  
Thick exhalations chok'd the subtile air,  
And fill'd the crews with madness and des-  
pair.

The morning breaks, but yet the vapour lies,  
Concealing ev'ry object from the eyes;  
And all the deep the same sad aspect bore  
As that which baulk'd their flatt'ring views before :  
When now the sun, with strong and melting rays,  
Look'd forth in majesty amidst the haze ;  
And, gently rising o'er the sullen deep,  
With soothing force, impressive breezes sweep.  
Mov'd by the easy pow'r the wind applies,—  
Warm'd by the fervent monarch of the skies,—  
The condensation softly pass'd away,  
And all expos'd again the ocean lay.  
And O! what rapture fill'd each seaman's breast,  
By ev'ry wild emotion well express'd,  
When near them now, again, they saw advance  
The whole united naval boast of France !  
“ O! glorious sight !” the British seaman cries;  
The tear of rapture glitt'ring in his eyes :  
Though greater far in numbers they appear,  
This in a seaman's breast can raise no fear,  
The only thought that now his heart inspires,  
Is on the foe to launch his vengeful fires.

Now, as the day moves on, the French combine,  
And in battalia form the dreadful line ;  
And as a furious boar, which through a wood  
By hound and hunter long hath been pursu'd,  
At length, returning on his active foes,  
The portrait of determin'd fury shews ;  
So Gallia's fleet, so long pursu'd, and far,  
No longer seek t' avoid the shock of war,  
But from their numbers hoping for success,  
In dreadful order to the conflict press.

Still distant far the British squadrons lie  
From where the streamers of defiance fly ;  
But ev'ry sail is spread along the mast,  
Which aught can intercept the passing blast :  
Aloft, the royal wooes the fickle breeze ;  
Beneath, the water-sail skims o'er the seas ;  
Whilst the long studding-sails on either side  
Like ample pennons, overshadow the tide.  
The gen'rous fire, the patriotic rage,  
The strong desire in battle to engage,

Sparkles in ev'ry eye; and high and low  
With equal ardour pant to meet the foe.  
Fair blows the breeze, the bounding vessels  
spring,

The topmasts groan, the heavy cannons ring!  
The mighty prows, which pow'rs resistless urge,  
Divide and dash afar the foaming surge;  
The foaming surge in ridges swells around,  
And vents its fury in a simm'ring sound,

But see! the enemy at length they near!  
Their headmost ships tread fast upon his rear;  
To shorten sail the Adm'ral's signal flies;  
By prompt obedience ev'ry ship replies.  
And now the line is form'd! with solemn beat  
The thund'ring drum bestirs a gen'rous heat.  
"*All hands to quarters!*"—swift to ev'ry gun  
Or to their other posts the seamen run.  
Whilst some the monst'rous cannon stand around,  
Waiting the word to bid their thunders sound,  
Some from the magazine in boxes bear  
The sable grain that taints the wholesome air;



And others, on the decks or tops prepar'd,  
Stand by to brace about the pliant yard,  
To make or shorten sail, with skilful hand,  
And do whate'er th' occasion may demand.

Aft on the quarter-deck the Chieftain stands,  
The laurel'd faulchion glitt'ring in his hands :  
Erect his mien ; his vesture wrought with gold ;  
He seems almost surpassing mortal mould !  
His look the seaman marks with awe-struck  
eye,

And, half-adoring, humbly passes by.  
Now one kind word amongst the crew bestow'd,  
Would send more life and energy abroad,  
Than if, like Danæ's lover, he should pour  
Himself amongst them in a golden show'r.  
The bold Lieutenants stand along the deck,  
Th' exuberance of bravery to check ;  
For, all unlike the conduct which was seen  
Once to degrade the abject French marine,  
'Stead of a spur, their valour needs a rein,  
The ardour of its fury to restrain.

Deep in the magazine, and far beneath  
The water's level,—(safe from missile death!)  
Surrounded by his crew, the Gunner hies,  
To yield the craving cannon fresh supplies.  
The Carpenter patrols the wings and well,  
Leaks between wind and water to repel :  
And, as a skilful surgeon's lenient hand  
Can close a wound, with unguents soft and  
    bland,  
So he with plugs each shot-hole well will close,  
And disappoint the object of the foes.  
Aft in the gloomy cockpit, buried deep,  
The Surgeon and his Mates their stations keep;  
And there the various implements are found  
To separate a limb, or staunch a wound.

On deck, amongst the crew, young Idas stands;  
The rough-turn'd cartridge-box adorns his hands.  
Whilst wond'ring expection holds his breath,  
He views the sad preparatives of death,  
And fir'd with curious wonder, longs to hear  
The full broadside salute his tingling ear;

Yet sighs to think how many a hero bold,  
Whose heart is cast in Honour's sterling mould,  
Shall, ere the proud triumphal moment come,  
Lie cold and rigid in the ocean's womb!  
"O! horrid war!" the youthful patriot cries,  
Whilst half a tear adorns his azure eyes;  
"When shall thy desolating fury cease,  
"And all mankind embrace in bonds of peace!"

The fleets draw near! and soon the youth shall  
find

A train of new ideas fill his mind.  
An awful silence reigns 'midst England's sons,  
Who stand in calm composure round their guns.  
But long ere they in closest order form,  
The Gauls begin to pour the iron-storm,  
If haply, thus, to Britain's gallant crew,  
Some loss and consternation may ensue;  
But the fierce show'r thus prematurely thrown,  
Pass'd harmless, like a noxious cloud o'erblown;  
And whilst, o'erhead the whistling bullets flew,  
The British seamen smil'd their fall to view,

Longing with tenfold int'rest to repay  
Those petty heralds of the dire affray;  
Whilst their proud ships, majestic o'er the  
    deep,  
Th' unbroken line in solemn silence keep;  
Nor with a solitary gun will deign  
The Frenchmen's dancing ardour to restrain.

The Gauls, to one old system ever true,  
Which with implicit practice they pursue,  
Chiefly amongst the rigging strive to pour  
The full-fraught fury of the iron show'r;  
That as a bird, which by the fowler's aim  
Is wounded sore, and flutters weak and lamè,  
The lagging ship, unable to obey  
The seaman's art, may fall an easy prey;  
Hence sails and cordage, in confusion cast,  
Full often flit in fragments to the blast;  
And masts and yards, in ragged splinters torn,  
Are o'er the wave in sad disorder borne.  
The British tars pursue another aim,  
And at the hull direct their balls in flame;

Striving by one terrific blow to sweep  
The pride of France beneath the flowing deep :  
Hence the torn barks—Britannia's proudest  
boast!

Who lucklessly depart from Gallia's coast ;  
Leaving their native ports of peace and ease  
For Britain's thunders and tempestuous seas ;  
Are oft so batter'd by the vengeful balls  
That rend and bruise their unprotected walls,  
That scarcely can the crazy hulls afford  
A safe conveyance to the crew on board.  
Yet oft the shot which for the vessel flies,  
Wrong bias'd, as the ship may roll or rise,  
Amongst the masts and yards its fury sheds,  
And sends them tumbling on the seamen's heads.

At length, so near the British squadrons drew,  
The wond'ring Frenchmen trembled at the view !  
Scarce two short furlongs' distance interpose  
Between the lines of old inveterate foes ;  
And now—behold ! High at the mainmast head  
Of Britain's Chief, the crimson banner spread,

Declares destruction's hour!—A thousand  
guns

Roar indignation on proud Gallia's sons.

Thick clouds of smoke,—tremendous bursts of  
fire,—

Loud bellowing thunders, terrible and dire,  
Fill all the air! The sun, affrighted, shrouds  
His sullied front amidst the rising clouds!

Hark to the crashing of that dire broadside,  
Which sends a mass of ruins o'er the tide!

So thick against the ship the bullets fall

—As rattling hailstones driv'n against a wall!

Great God! how dread the scene! Where shall  
the muse

Retire, the horrid sight of death to lose?

Where shall she bend her flight; where sink, or  
soar,

To 'scape the cannons' brain-distracting roar?

The gentle maids who song and mirth inspire,

And mortals teach to smite the tinkling lyre;

In peaceful groves and lucid streams delight,

Far from the discords of the frenzied fight.



But here far other scenes the mind engage:  
Destruction, Terror, and infuriate Rage,  
In wild confusion shed their influence round,  
And human groans by thund'ring guns are  
drown'd!

Lo! ev'ry cannon, with destructive aim,  
Spits forth his fury in a burst of flame!  
So thick the dreadful balls in vollies fly,  
Like flocks of crows they darken all the sky.  
Shot meets with shot, and each, in pieces rent,  
Falls show'ring on the crew by whom 'twas sent!  
Black piles of sulph'ry vapour curling rise,  
And blot the genial lustre of the skies!  
Should yawning hell its horrid depths expose,  
Its deadly stench, its omnifarious woes;  
The damn'd would look abroad in wild amaze,  
And at the dreadful scene, astonish'd gaze.  
The boist'rous waves, which late, with saucy  
swell,  
In wanton frolic round the squadrons fell;  
Drop their proud heads and gently sink away  
Smooth as the pond where rural breezes play:

But ah! this smooth expanse is cover'd o'er  
(Dreadful to tell!) with intermingling gore!  
And, on the decks, the slipp'ry, sanguine flood  
Betrays the seaman's steps;—he treads in  
blood!

Lo! where the British banner's crimson glare  
Streams meteorous through the darken'd air!  
Where'er it moves, destruction and dismay  
Denote its presence and confess its sway!  
How oft, in vain, have all the mighty pow'rs,  
That dwell on Europe's war-delighting shores,  
Essay'd that banner from its staff to tear,  
And hoist the ensign of submission there!  
Futile attempt! Though, leagu'd with envious  
France

The naval strength of all the world advance;  
Not all the world, with all their cares and  
pains,  
Shall rend the flag which Providence sustains.  
—Cheer'd by the sight, the death-defying tar  
Hurls forth the dreadful thunderbolts of war

With tenfold fury! As an angry bear,  
Robb'd of her whelps, his furious eye-balls  
glare!

No interval of rest the heroes know,  
Inflam'd with madness to subdue the foe!

Now whilst the adverse fleets by mutual rage  
Inspir'd, with unabated warmth engage;  
While masts and yards in foul confusion fall,  
Sails rend, ropes break, and Havoc reigns o'er  
all:

The British Oak, to vindicate her name,  
And on her stock to graft the plant of fame,  
Had rang'd 'longside the largest of their fleet,  
Anxious to gain a triumph most complete.  
Yard-arm to yard-arm there long time she lay  
Like some fierce panther fast'ning on his prey.  
Alternately, the rumbling of the wheels,  
(While o'er the lab'ring wave the vessel  
reels;)

The cannons' surly note, that rends the sky;  
The bullets' whiz, which whistle as they fly;

---

The shout of exultation ; and the groan  
Which makes the suff'rings of the wounded  
    known,  
Are heard distinct ; then all in one unite,  
To swell the horrors of the bloody fight !  
The frightened tenants of the deafen'd flood,—  
The shark, voracious epieure in blood,  
And all the monsters of the waters, fly ;  
And, trembling, in the depths of ocean lie !

Loud to his crew the British Chieftain cries,  
“ Now for a wat'ry grave or noble prize !  
For ne'er shall England's flag inglorious close  
Till o'er our heads the gath'ring water flows.”  
He said ; and closing with the hostile crew,  
A mighty hawser from the bows they threw  
And lash'd them to their side ! Ah, then began  
The murd'rous scene ! The blood in torrents ran.  
Muzzle to muzzle ev'ry gun was plac'd,  
And lawless carnage revell'd in the waist !  
No more at random they their bullets throw,  
But face to face they deal the mortal blow.

And, drifting far beyond th' embattled line  
With frenzy fir'd the dreadful work they join!

The battle now, with equal fury wag'd,  
Though not with equal skill, long time had rag'd;  
When Britain's guardian pow'r which hover'd  
nigh,

Gave to her sons the palm of Victory.

As, 'cross the Frenchmens' bows their vessel hung,

And at each loud broadside the cannons rung;

A well-directed shot, with bias true,

On the sure pennons of Destruction flew,

And smote the bowsprit with so fierce a stroke,

That, like a reed, the massive member broke!

The bowsprit gone;—back starting with a bound,

The lofty fore-mast sudden freedom found;

A short-liv'd freedom, which in ruin ends!

Prone o'er the ship the stately pillar bends,

And, guided by the main and middle stay,

Carried the two remaining masts away!

A gen'ral shriek that rends the frightened air,

Denotes the Frenchmen's mis'ry and despair;

---

While, from the broken masts, or trailing shrouds,  
Their seamen in the ocean drop in crouds!  
Amaz'd to see calamity so dire,  
Britannia's gen'rous sons relax their fire;  
And, with a great forbearance, wait to know  
The present state and purpose of the foe.  
Alas! the dismal wreck, which o'er the side  
In piteous ruin spreads along the tide;  
The decks, with mangled limbs and corpses spread;  
Their numbers thinn'd by those already dead;  
Forbid the smallest thought of further strife,  
But yield them pris'ners to preserve their life.  
The triple-tinted banner, which so long  
Has wav'd defiance to the British throng,  
Now, with exhausted spirits, down they haul,  
And to their gen'rous foe for quarter call;  
Nor call in vain; the British seaman's ear  
Is ever op'd misfortune's voice to hear;  
And 'tis when hazarding his life to save  
A drowning captive from the whelming wave,  
His character in full perfection shines,  
And with the hero all the man combines!



Soon as the Britons see the flag haul'd down,  
All former hate they in oblivion drown ;  
And, having vented in three thund'ring cheers,  
Their exultation in the captives' ears,  
They check the ebullitions of their joy,  
And to assist them all their thoughts employ :  
On deck they swarm, and with delighted eyes  
They haste to take possession of the prize.  
First at the loftiest stump's remaining head  
The glorious flags of victory they spread,  
Then from the tangling cordage, soon they free  
The ship, and cast the ruins in the sea.  
The pris'ners now secur'd, they soon resign  
The prize, and join again th' embattled line.

Now full eight hours in carnage dire had pass'd  
And undiminish'd fury fill'd the last ;  
Nor could the falling shades of ev'ning tame  
The rage of Valour, and the love of Fame.  
At length, when all the main was dy'd with  
gore,  
And o'erspent Bravery could do no more ;

---

When those who fain would still the combat wage,  
Exhausted, wanted vigour to engage;—  
The Pow'r Supreme, who saw with pitying eye  
The horrid scene, that mov'd the loathing sky;  
Sent from th' empyreal plains—(her native seat)  
Fair Victory, the British host to greet.  
Pleas'd at the mandate, swift she cleaves the skies,  
And to her fav'rite fleet enraptur'd flies.  
A stellar coronet adorns her head,  
The blooming laurel in her hand is spread;  
Her dexter hand a gleaming faulchion bore  
Of hardest temper, and be-dropt with gore!  
The congregated clouds before her bow,  
And lo! she lights elate on Britain's prow.  
Encourag'd by the sight, each glowing tar  
With eager zeal renews the work of war!  
Whilst, terror-smitten, all th' infernal crew  
(Rage, Slaughter, and Dismay) her coming view,  
Nor plan resistance; but, with horrid yell,  
In broken flight descend again to hell.  
From ev'ry vessel which the Goddess past  
She tore the Gallic banner from the mast,

And nail'd the British ensign in its stead,  
Whose glories now throughout the fleet were  
spread,

While thus, by Vict'ry led, the British fleet  
Renew'd the scene of conflict and defeat,  
A sudden burst was heard :—Each turn'd his eye,  
Anxious the cause and consequence to spy ;  
When lo ! a lofty pile of flame and smoke  
Forth from the deck of Gallia's chieftain broke ;  
Like wild-fire o'er the crackling planks it pass'd,  
Flew up the shrouds and wrapt each haughty  
mast ;

The haughty masts like meteor-torches blaze,  
And all the ocean kindles at their rays !

Tremendous sight ! The wild tyrannic flame,  
Whose fury scarce a waterspout could tame,  
Increasing fast, through all the hull had spread,  
Which gleam'd a solid mass of vivid red !  
By ev'ry favourable fuel nurs'd,  
Thro' the burnt ports the flames in torrents burst ;

Whilst, ever-and-anon, as stronger grew  
The gath'ring fire, the heated cannon threw  
Their deadly charges forth, with random blow,—  
Hurl'd, indiscriminate, on friend or foe;  
In sad succession, o'er the burning side  
The blazing masts div'd in the hissing tide;  
Whilst all the hull, like some extensive pyre,  
Became a body of compacted fire!

The sun had long fulfill'd his daily race,  
And in the ocean bath'd his golden face;  
Yet from the ruin spread so strong a light  
As chas'd afar the dusky shades of night.  
The vivid lustre which the ship bestows  
Wide o'er the wave with bright effulgence  
glows,  
Reflected thence the brilliant fires arise,  
And tinge, with crimson hue, the glowing skies.  
The vessels which surround the ardent light  
Appear, in more than wonted freshness, bright;  
While those which are at greater distance laid,  
Are rob'd in all the solemn garb of shade,

So burn'd the ship, whilst in the heated wave,  
Her frightened crew, their threaten'd lives to save,  
In swarms leap'd forth, and found a wat'ry  
grave;

Save those whom Britain's sons, humane and  
good,

Dragg'd, half expiring, from the rav'nous  
flood.

Conflicting vessels ceas'd the dire affray,

And in a dread and solemn silence lay;

Save when, at intervals, a cannon's blaze

Darted its transient flash across the haze.

Thus half the night had pass'd. Around their  
guns

Waiting for orders, stood Britannia's sons;

The burning ship, now nearly all decay'd,

Was level with the rising waters laid;

And various other vessels, in their turn,

By fate or negligence began to burn.

The Britons from their quarters soon retire,

And aid to quench the hostile vessels' fire;

---

Prompt to assist, with willing hearts they go,—  
Distress obliterates the name of foe.

Now Morn's first blushes gleam'd across the  
main,  
And render'd the important scene more plain :  
Of Gallia's vaunted fleet, the greater share  
Had yielded, Britain's conqu'ring flag to wear ;  
The rest in haste display'd their ev'ry sail,  
And bore away before a welcome gale.

And now, whilst gratitude each breast in-  
spires,  
And ev'y bosom feels its pleasing fires,  
The British crews, with simultaneous praise,  
Their hands and hearts to Heav'n's dread Mo-  
narch raise,  
Whose sov'reign interposing arm was spread,  
In danger's hour, to shield their menac'd head.

Their grateful pæans o'er, without delay  
They haste to take possession of the prey :



From ev'ry ship a portion of the crew  
Is sent to render all assistance due.  
This task fulfill'd; the bloody decks made clean;  
The rigging mended, and the whole serene;  
They take account (to close the dreadful day)  
Of those who perish'd in the fierce affray.  
Sad list! and long! Full many a Briton true,  
Whose heart the noblest sense of honour knew;  
Full many a true-bred seaman, skill'd to brave  
Alike the brunt of battle and the wave,  
Swells the sad page; and, crown'd with glory, lie  
Prostrate before the face of Victory!

Peace to their 'parted souls! their toils are o'er,  
Nor storm nor battle shall disturb them more;  
No shade of trouble shall their peace molest,  
For ever anchor'd in the ports of rest.  
For them fair Hist'ry opes her snowy page,  
Rich with the records of each former age;  
There Truth's impartial hand shall gild their  
name,  
And give the lasting register to Fame.

Sigh not then that the gallant crew have pass'd  
The storms of life, and weather'd ev'ry blast;  
But hail their entrance on that happy shore,  
Where wars and tempests shall disturb no more!  
They are not lost: the soul's seraphic fire  
(Immortal essence!) never can expire;  
But, in the shining courts of bliss on high,  
They enter on a bright eternity!  
Whilst their example cheers the patriot's eyes,  
Succeeding bands of heroes shall arise,  
Who, emulous of Fame, shall bravely go,  
And deal revenge and ruin 'mongst the foe!

END OF BOOK VI.

**BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

**BOOK VII.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

*The Uncertainty of human Expectations.—Introduction.—  
Prognostics of a Storm.—Violence of Storms in India.—  
Preparation to meet it.—The Tempest breaks.—Gulf of  
Florida.—The sick Sailor Boy.—Morning.—Fleet dispers  
ed.—The Storm increases.—Prosperity and Preservation  
urged as Motives to Gratitude and Humanity.—A French  
Ship in Distress.—Conduct of her Crew.—The helpless  
Situation of those at Sea, in Storms.—British and French  
Ships contrasted.—The Prize in imminent Danger.—She  
founders.—Humanity of the British Seamen.—The Tem  
pest moderates.*

---







THE STORM



# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK VII.

### *The Storm.*

AH me! how changeful life's uncertain state!  
How full of mystery the ways of Fate!  
Full oft, the object of our fond desires,  
The point to which our ev'ry thought aspires,—  
Just at the moment when we reach its charms,  
Flies like a shadow from our vacant arms;  
And, hurl'd from fancied castles in the air,  
We perish in the gulf of black despair!

I, who of late Britannia's triumphs told,  
And shew'd her sons, in native courage bold,  
Standing unmov'd in Danger's trying hour,  
While palsied Frenchmen trembled at their pow'r;

---

Till Victory appear'd to Valour's aid,  
And at their feet the pride of Gaul was laid;—  
Must now, alas! more painful themes pourtray,—  
The warring elements in fierce affray;  
And strive to shew, in Terror's low'ring form,  
The dreadful genius of the mighty storm!

O! for Arion's\* melting pow'rs of verse,  
The scenes of sad disaster to rehearse;  
And, in a seaman's artless phrase, to tell  
The fresh misfortunes which our ships befel;  
Till the sad numbers wake the sigh of woe,  
And sympathetic tears unbidden flow.  
Come, soft-ey'd Pity, Heav'n-descended maid!  
And thou, O sweet Remembrance! lend thine  
aid;  
Give to my harp the soul-subduing lay,  
And chain the sad events in due array;  
Till all the elements, whose force I sing,  
Lend their peculiar pow'rs to aid my string:

---

\* *Arion*, the *nomen poeticum* adopted by Falconer.

Deep be the strain, as ocean's bed profound ;  
Free, as the charter'd wind that flies around ;  
Bright, as the forked lightning in its pow'r ;  
And soft and melting as the falling show'r.

Now Eve advances, and th' exhausted crew  
Require repose, to arduous labours due.  
Silent and sad they snatch the tasteless meal ;  
And down their cheeks their manly sorrows steal,  
As now the unincumber'd seat they view  
Of some lov'd messmate ; honest, kind and true ;  
Then to his couch the pensive seaman hies,  
And Sleep's soft pow'r a transient balm applies.

Those who on deck remain, the watch to keep,  
With wistful eye survey the gloomy deep ;  
For now, its hollow roar, and heavy swell,  
The coming of a mighty storm foretell :  
Such storms as ne'er in northern seas were known,  
Though oft experienc'd in the torrid zone ;  
Where cataracts, not show'rs, in floods descend,  
And hurricanes their dread assistance lend ;

---

Whilst thunder, hail, and lightning, in their  
train,  
Shake the firm earth, and scourge the flying  
main;  
Till towns destroy'd, and forests whirl'd in air,  
Present a scene of havoc and despair!

If Heav'n commands the tempest to descend,  
'Tis vain in man its purpose to contend;  
Th' Eternal rules! and by his great decrees  
Lets loose or bridles the obedient seas.  
Yet what the art of seamanship could do  
To 'scape the storm, was done by ev'ry crew.  
From their high stations, where they brave the  
blast,  
Their skilful hands send down the tow'ring mast;  
Quiv'ring in air, the topsails next they reef,  
And use each means to give the ship relief.  
To Britain's shores their destination lay,  
And there already had they bent their way;  
But now, as stronger blows the ruthless gale,  
Necessity enjoins to shorten sail.

At length the leaden-sandal'd Morn arose,  
Which usher'd in the gloomy day of woes;  
Ah! how unlike the soul-delighting scene,  
Which erst their gladden'd eyes with joy had  
seen!

No ruddy glances from the lucid east  
Foretold a coming day of peace and rest;  
But, like a new-made widow, from her bed,  
Array'd in black, Aurora rais'd her head.  
Her tears, which fell in frequent bursts of rain;  
Her sighs, which whistled o'er the heaving main;  
Wrought in the seaman many a boding fear;  
And all the crew were fill'd with doubts severe.

Lo! from the north what black'ning vapours  
rise,  
And blot the genial lustre of the skies!  
Each moment glomerating horror brings,  
And the black tempest broods on outspread wings.

A flock of frightened birds, blown off from land,  
On board the reeling vessel take their stand:

---

Perch'd on the tott'ring yard, with ruffled form,  
They seem the heralds of the coming storm.

The tempest bursts! Aloud the thunder roars;  
The lightning flares; the reeking torrent pours!  
In moving hills tremendous waves arise  
(Their white-tops boiling) to the dingy skies;  
Then, sinking in a moment from the sight,  
Disclose a deep abyss, as dark as night!  
Rock'd to and fro; true to no spot or stay,  
The vessel lies engulph'd amidst the sea.  
Now, bounding o'er the buoyant wave, she  
rides,

As if she mock'd the fury of the tides;  
Now, sinking in the gulf that yawns beneath,  
Threats her brave inmates with an instant death!  
With sorrowing hearts the anxious seamen find  
The sails no more can stand against the wind;  
E'en the storm-staysail from the trembling stay  
In flitting pendants rent, is blown away;  
And, whilst the thunder's car terrific rolls,  
The vessel drives beneath her naked poles.



Thus, in Destruction's grasp, the busy crew  
Through Florida's dire gulf their way pursue;  
Where ne'er the genius of the tempest sleeps,  
But ever-raging storms molest the deeps!  
Though rous'd to feel, yet still unknown to  
fear,

The gen'rous tars in duty persevere;  
Anticipating the delightful hour  
When safely moor'd beneath the British shore, }  
They shall behold the tempest's rage no more. }

Whilst at their sev'ral posts the crew were  
found,

And ey'd the various seas that foam'd around;—  
Whilst o'er the deck the raging billows swept,  
And they with pain their slipp'ry footing kept;  
The tars, who near the middle hatchway stood,  
A novel sight with admiration view'd,—  
All naked to his shirt,—with panting breath,  
And looks that bore the pallid hue of death;  
Scrambling upon the ladder of the waist,  
Whilst his right-hand a water-jug embrac'd,

They saw a little helpless urchin crawl,  
And heard his feeble voice for water call!  
'Twas helpless Idas! On that very day  
When from Jamaica's shores they bent their  
way,

He droop'd and languish'd, like a fainting flow'r  
Scorch'd by the sun in his meridian pow'r.

Th' ensuing conflict check'd his pains awhile,  
The sanguine scene did all his thoughts beguile,  
Nor left a moment that might be bestow'd

On cares which from his private feelings flow'd,  
But soon as he the couch of rest had gain'd,  
His burning pulse, alas! too well, explain'd  
The raging fever which his vigour drain'd.

The dreadful storm that rattled overhead,  
Had drawn th' attendants from his swinging bed;  
And, parch'd with thirst,—no friendly seaman  
nigh,

The wants of famish'd nature to supply,—  
With what small portion of his strength endur'd,  
He sought the deck, by love of life allur'd,  
And there the cooling beverage procur'd.

Then, aided to his hammock, dropt to rest,  
Whilst not a thought of danger cross'd his breast;

Another night was now approaching fast  
In terror rob'd; more dreadful than the last:  
The fiend of havoc shouted on the gale,  
And e'en the boldest countenance grew pale!  
Tremendous thunders shook th' affrighted sky,  
And roaring billows made a hoarse reply;  
Whilst from the rending vapours (sad to view!)  
The forked fires in wild disorder flew!  
One moment, all, as strongest noon was bright,—  
The next was darkness and appalling night!

Oh! ye, who safe reclining on the shore,  
Hear the faint thunders at a distance roar;  
Or, when the tempest bows the sighing trees,  
Remark in apathy, "How fresh the breeze!"  
While safe within your solid walls ye lie,  
Nor even view the changes of the sky;—  
O! think, with gratitude, what time ye hear  
The distant tempest rumbling on the ear;

How happy is your lot, how greatly blest,  
Safe from its fury, shelter'd, and at rest!  
And O! with soft compassion think on those  
Who dare not seek the blessings of repose:  
Who, even now, while ye at ease recline,  
And music's strains enrich your mantling wine;  
Far other sounds than music stand to hear,—  
And base-voic'd thunders fill their hearts with  
fear!

Who, wash'd along the tempest-broken deck,  
Still cling, tenacious, to the parting wreck;  
And, as around the ruthless billows swell,  
Hear, in the thunder's growl, their solemn knell!

Thus three long days and nights the vessels lay,  
To cruel winds and boist'rous waves a prey;  
Sad, tedious rounds! which, with a different name,  
In all essential matters were the same.  
No cheerful sun, with vivifying ray  
Appear'd, to mark the proper bounds of day;  
No moon, attended by her starry train,  
Declar'd, of night, the undisputed reign;

But one terrific gloom, and murky veil,  
Did ev'ry object from the eye conceal,  
Save when the lucid lightnings, fierce and  
    bright,  
With ardour too intense for mortal sight,  
Wrapt sky and ocean in a blaze of light!  
Such darkness, once, on Egypt's wond'ring  
    coasts,  
With horror smote her unbelieving hosts,  
When, at JEHOVAH's word, and Moses' hand,  
A darkness tangible oppress'd the land,  
While Pharaoh's race, oppress'd with anxious  
    care,  
Three days sat motionless in wild despair!\*

Now the fourth morning rose: with transient  
    gleams  
The pallid sun sent forth some wat'ry beams,  
Merely sufficient to the crew to show  
The full extent and measure of their woe.

---

\* See Exodus, chap. x. ver. 21, &c.

The sky assum'd a dull uncertain hue,  
And all the fleet were scatter'd far from view,  
Save one poor prize, which, settling in the  
    wave,  
Threaten'd her seamen with a speedy grave.  
In vain they spread the signals of distress,  
And minute guns their urgent wants express;  
Alas! no aid their comrades can afford;  
No succour render to the crew on board;  
So high around them rose each liquid hill,  
That ev'ry boat would in an instant fill;  
And, saving their companions from the tomb,  
The tars would meet their own immediate doom!  
Horrific hour! big with impending fate! . . .  
The muse recoils the sequel to relate!

    Whilst round the leaky, deep-devoted prize  
Th' insulting waves in dire succession rise;  
Whilst varied deaths in frightful shapes appear,  
And Hope becomes the prisoner of Fear;—  
Still ev'ry means the seamen try, to free  
The lab'ring vessel from the tyrant sea.



As at the pumps a chosen party stand,  
And ply the clanking winch with pow'rful hand,  
The rest, retiring from the scene of care,  
Pour out their feelings in impressive pray'r.  
"Thou Pow'r Supreme; our Father and our Guide;  
"Whose potent voice commands the raging tide;  
"Receive our pray'r, if such thy gracious will,  
"And to the heavy tempest say,—Be still!  
"To whom, (Eternal Sov'reign!) but to Thee,  
"In danger's hour, shall man for refuge flee?  
"Though we, alas! when safety blest our lot,  
"Thy laws have slighted and thy name forgot;  
"Yet Thou art gracious: let thy grace appear,  
"And save us from the fate that hovers near!"  
Alas! without effect they urge their suit!  
The Pow'r invok'd to their request was mute;  
A chill refusal all the breezes blow,  
And, in rough sounds, the billows thunder "No!"  
The ruthless tempest, still more fierce and loud,  
Or springs the mast, or snaps the straining shroud;  
Whilst wave on wave in dreadful phalanx urge,  
And the weak vessel trembles to the surge!

Destruction hovers near on sable wings;  
Through the loose cords a dirge the tempest sings;  
And ev'ry sound that fills the troubled air,  
In solemn accents seems to say—"Prepare!"

O! lamentable state of those who roam  
On faithless ocean, and forsake their home!  
He, who on land beholds the tempest rise,  
To some near cave or friendly hovel flies;  
Where, though the elements be all in arms,  
At ease he sits, nor fears the loud alarms.  
Or should he in the open plain or field  
(Where nought is found that can a shelter yield)  
Endure the fury of the stormy blast,—  
Yet the firm earth is faithful to the last.  
Though o'er his head the bursting thunders  
    sound,  
With sure and certain step he treads the ground,  
Till the wild elements their conflict cease,  
Or some kind mansion shelter him in peace.  
But he who journies on the faithless main,  
In Danger's hour a refuge seeks in vain!

When, in a mass descending from the skies,  
O'er the wide sea the deadly tempest flies;  
The frightened sea, collecting all his pow'rs,  
In mountains rising, thunders on his shores;  
And the most stately bark his waters bear,  
Which, erst, with friendly breezes, mild and fair,  
Pursued her way; is now at random cast,—  
The sport of ev'ry wave and ev'ry blast!

So, on the mercy of the waters hurl'd,—  
Their topmasts struck, their sails in order furl'd,  
The consort ships, across the stormy spray,  
As winds and waves impell'd, pursued their way.  
The BRITISH OAK, whose well-cemented frame  
That tree bestow'd, from which she took her  
name;—

Though ev'ry shock her creaking timbers strain'd,  
Impervious to the waters still remain'd;  
(Whilst, to protect her crew, her massy side  
Oppos'd a mighty barrier to the tide;)  
And, faithful to the steady timoneer,  
Turn'd her bold front where'er he wish'd to steer;

Thus 'scaping many a wave that rose around,  
Which else had 'whelm'd her in the dark profound.

The Gallic ship, of worse materials join'd,  
Whilst skill inferior had her parts combin'd,—  
Was far less calculated to sustain  
The long-protracted fury of the main.  
The British balls, of which her frame was full,  
Had so effectually assail'd her hull,  
That now, at ev'ry roll, her batter'd side,  
Drank, like a thirsty sieve, the copious tide.  
In vain their aid the wretched pris'ners gave  
To free her from the fast-encroaching wave;  
In vain they cut the lofty masts away,  
And plung'd the sable cannon in the sea;—  
The leaks increas'd, and now the waters bold  
Had swept the decks and fill'd the bursting hold!

Though fell Destruction, o'er the boiling tide,  
Was now advancing fast with rapid stride;  
Though, long before the fatal hour was come  
Which gave the vessel to a liquid tomb,

Her crew foresaw her end; no sound arose  
That shew'd a fear of swift-approaching woes.  
The gallant Chief, well train'd in Peril's school,  
Whose office 'twas, on board the prize to rule;  
Though not a gleam of hope they now could  
    boast,  
Stood like a rock, still faithful to his post,  
And cheer'd the spirits of his toil-worn host;  
Who, at the pumps, with unabated glee,  
Still pour'd the briny torrents in the sea;  
And still had they the toilsome task maintain'd,  
As long as life, or health, or strength remain'd,  
But now the pumps were choak'd, the waters  
    rose,  
And instant death appear'd the scene to close!

The brave, unhappy crew, thus greatly cross'd,  
Now well assur'd that ev'ry hope is lost;  
Cease from their useless labours, and await,  
In silent horror, their impending fate.  
Struck by a billow with so fierce a shock  
As if her hull had plung'd against a rock,—

Her rending planks in wild disorder start!  
A gen'ral shout ascends from ev'ry part,  
And terror enervates the stoutest heart.  
Thrown on her side, a mighty wreck she lies,  
And o'er her prostrate hull the billow flies,  
Whilst on the savage waves, at random cast,  
Innum'rous fragments drive before the blast.  
And lo! another sea, with dreadful sweep,  
And dire concussion, sends her to the deep!  
Whilst in her womb, full many a hero brave,  
Descends, unaided, to a wat'ry grave!

The consort crew, who saw, with pitying eye,  
The last sad scene of ocean's tragedy;  
Losing their prudence, in the gen'rous strife,  
To snatch a drowning fellow-man to life,  
Hoist out the boats; and o'er the fickle wave  
Cheerly they row, the sinking crew to save!  
Heav'n saw, well pleas'd, the soul-ennobling deed,  
And to their zeal the victor palm decreed;  
And many a seaman, by their bold address  
Snatch'd from the deep, remain'd their toils to bless.



---

And now, at length, in pity to their state,  
At Heav'n's behest, the stormy winds abate;  
The growling thunder has forgot to roar,  
The waves, tumultuous, threat the sky no more.  
With moderated force the breezes play,  
And aid, again, the vessel on her way.  
Their welcome aid her quicken'd pace declares;—  
Briskly she moves before propitious airs;  
Whilst the glad seamen raise the grateful eye,  
And bless the guardian Pow'r that rules above the  
sky!

END OF BOOK VII.



**BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.**

**BOOK VIII.**

---

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

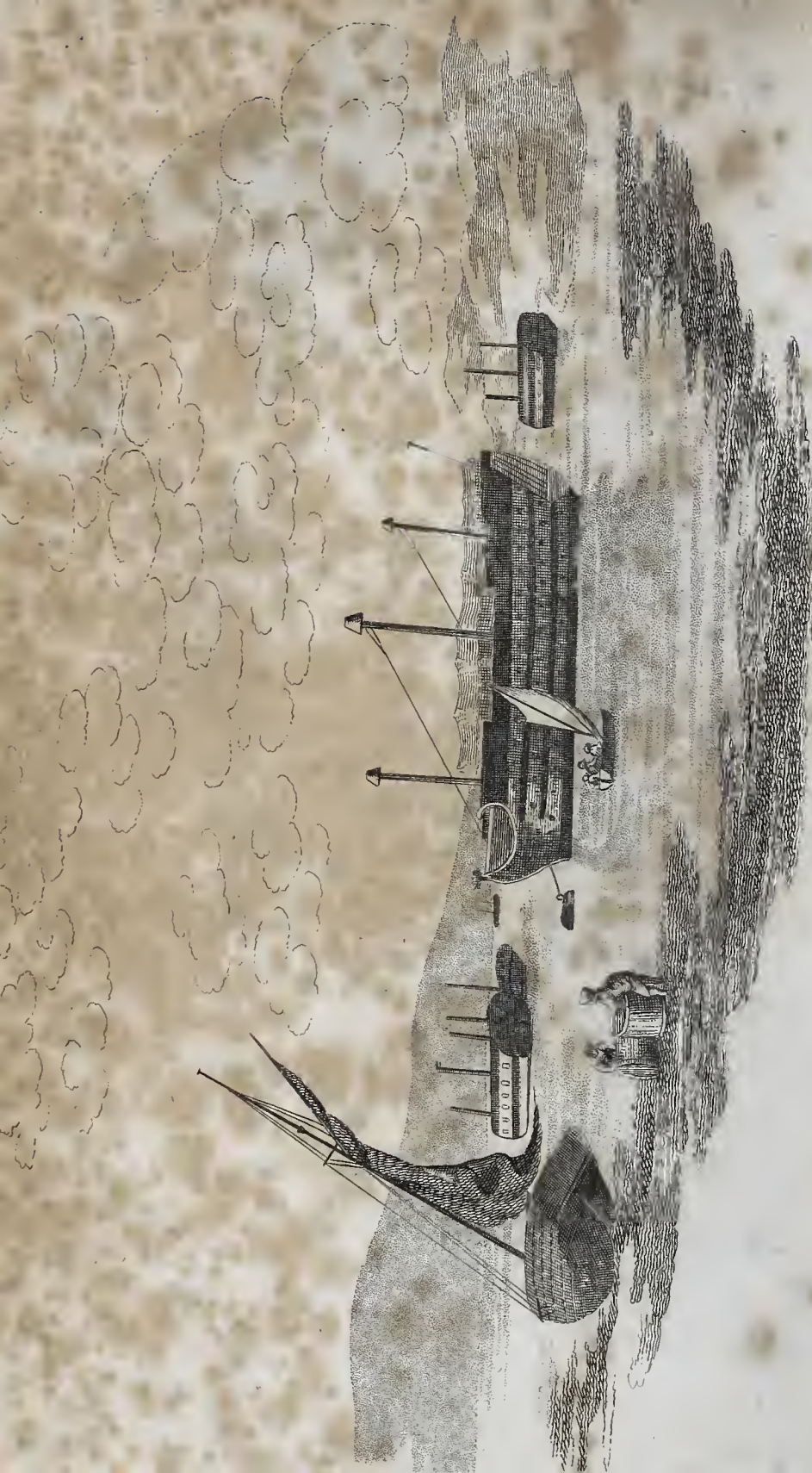
*The Ship steers for England.—Pleasures of Anticipation.—The dying Seaman.—His Burial.—A Sailor's Reflections.—Arrival of a Packet.—Peace proclaimed.—General Joy on Board, and whimsical Manner of expressing it.—Ancient Sports.—Arrival in the Channel.—The Ship arrives in Hamoaze, and is unrigged.—Crew paid off.—Address to Parliament.—Conclusion.*

---





# THE RETURN





# BRITAIN'S BULWARKS.

## BOOK VIII.

### *The Return.*

AND now, again, before the fav'ring gale,  
The tow'ring ship distends the scooping sail :  
And, as for Britain's well-lov'd isle they steer,  
The tars forget the scenes of recent fear ;  
Or, if remember'd, they but give a zest  
To softer thoughts which now possess their breast,  
The dear idea of their native home,  
Gilds the past hours, and brightens those to  
    come ;  
And when, through Hope's delusive glass, they  
    view  
Those scenes where erst their happiest moments  
    flew ;—

Behold the kindred circle gath'ring round  
Their long-lost relative: and catch the sound  
Of some lov'd voice,—some parent, spouse, or  
child,  
Whose accents often have their griefs beguild;—  
Joy swells each heart; the flow'r of fancy blooms;  
Each countenance a placid smile assumes;  
Delicious transports o'er their bosoms roll,  
And sweet reflections fill th' enraptur'd soul.

Meanwhile, the vessel's gentle pace to aid,  
Her ev'ry sail is from the mast display'd;  
And as a charger, when he hears afar  
The trumpet's clang, that breathes the note of war,  
Lifts his proud neck, exulting in the sound,  
And tears, with prancing hoofs, the trembling  
ground;—  
So, darting onward with a graceful pride,  
The broad-wing'd vessel cleaves the yielding tide.

Yet one there was,—a man of humble name,  
Alike unknown to Fortune and to Fame,—

To whose sad heart, oppress'd by sore disease,  
Not e'en the smiles of Hope could render  
ease.

To slow-consuming pains a passive prey,  
Stretch'd in his swinging couch the suff'rer lay,  
Whilst his affliction, baffling human art,  
Besieg'd life's strongest citadel,—the heart!  
Yet still his manly front, by Honour scarr'd,  
That spoke his long career of labours hard—  
Retain'd a tincture of that healthy hue  
Which once Hygeia o'er his features threw.

So have I seen a venerable oak,  
Its spreading arms by storms successive broke,—  
Although its inward core was all decay'd;  
And in the space the truant schoolboy play'd;—  
Although its naked, with'ring roots, were found  
Sapless and dry, emerging from the ground;  
Yet still around its knobby cap were seen  
Some youngling twigs, and foliations green,  
Which barely serv'd to shew the thread of life  
within.

The doctor rack'd the pharmacopie art,  
To stimulate afresh the weary heart ;  
And ev'ry messmate kindly sought to cheer  
The drooping tar, by services sincere ;  
Anxious to see, if possible, once more  
The vet'ran landed on his native shore.  
But ah! in vain the doctor spends his skill ;  
In vain the nurse's task the tars fulfil ;  
Cold Death has enter'd at some weaken'd part,  
And makes his swift advances to the heart.  
His triumphs well the languid hero knew,  
And felt his forehead moist with mortal dew ;  
Yet ere the breeze of life had quite decay'd,  
And Death's pale flag was on his brow display'd,—

With accents low, addressing one who long  
Had been his friend amidst the hardy throng ;  
Who all his perils, all his griefs had shar'd,  
But whom both war and sickness yet had spar'd ;

With great exertion he his silence broke,  
And, all his strength collecting, thus he spoke :

---

“ Messmate, I find life’s voyage nearly o’er;  
Soon shall I anchor on another shore,  
Where, safely moor’d my crazy hulk shall lie,  
Till Time’s last gasp shall summon me on high.  
Yet ere my soul by Death is tow’d away,  
I, of my chest, to thee bequeath the key.  
Few are the articles my trunk contains,  
But yet, though few, acquir’d with many pains.  
When thou, as soon thou wilt, shalt reach that shore  
Whose coasts, alas ! my eyes shall view no more,—  
To Kate, my ever-faithful partner, bear  
The trust that’s now committed to thy care.  
Ah ! little thought I, when in sov’reign pride  
Our gallant ship first cross’d the swelling tide,  
Whilst wond’ring landsmen lin’d the gazing shore,  
That I should see my gentle Kate no more !  
The ship again the friendly port shall reach ;  
Again the seamens’ kindred croud the beach ;  
There my poor Kate amongst the rest will stand,  
Waiting, impatient, to behold me land ;  
Ah Kate ! go home ; no husband comes to thee,  
Thy spouse lies buried, distant far at sea ! ”



O tell her that where'er our voyage lay,  
Her image still consol'd me on the way;  
That her lov'd name employ'd my parting breath,  
And fill'd my fancy in the hour of death!  
—To thee, dear messmate, whose consoling voice  
Has often made my sinking heart rejoice;  
Who oft, with me, the tedious watch hast kept,  
Whilst in their hammocks our companions  
slept,—

This curious pipe I give, of ancient days,  
Whose twisted stem a true-love knot pourtrays,  
And round the bowl thou seest, in figures large,  
The chivalrous exploits of bold saint George.  
The silver stopper bears thy messmate's name;—  
To me, in due succession, Tom, it came  
From my sire's sire; and, had the line run on,  
It should have grac'd the pocket of my son;  
But Heav'n in mercy clos'd his infant eye,  
That he for me should never heave a sigh!  
My knife I give——," then gasping wide for  
breath  
Th' expiring vet'ran struggled hard with death;



And turning, in convulsions, to the side;—  
“ Adieu, dear Tom—O! Kate,—my wife!” he  
cried,—  
“ Have mercy, Heav’n!” then clos’d his eyes  
and died!

Soon through the ship the mournful tidings ran,  
And all the crew deplor’d the much-lov’d man;  
From ev’ry part they croud around his bed,  
Unwilling to believe that he is dead.  
Alas! the rigid limb, the darken’d eye,  
The pow’rless pulse, the unreplenish’d sigh,  
Bespeak the sordid mass of lifeless clay,  
Whose active principle has fled away.  
Now, shrouded in his hammock, from the  
bay  
The grieving seamen bear his corpse away,  
A grating is his bier; and over all,  
A union-jack affords a simple pall.

What though no splendid coffin, richly grac’d  
With needless sculpture and expensive taste,

Receive his bones ; what though no rich saloon,  
Hung round with black, exclude the glaring noon ;  
What though no sable mutes, in solemn row,  
Affect to hide the tears—that never flow !  
The tear that drops upon a seaman's bier  
Does honour to his mem'ry—'tis sincere ;  
And, when that sad and awful day shall come,  
Which summons all men to their final doom !  
Thousands whose lives in opulence were pass'd,  
And splendid fin'ry follow'd to the last ;  
Around whose marble busts and gilded tombs,  
In wild disorder still the willow blooms,  
But who ne'er wrought, on life's important stage,  
One action worthy the historic page ;  
Shall wish, in vain, when wishing is too late,  
That they, like him, had fill'd a useful state.

But hark !—"All hands," are pip'd. The sea-  
men hear

The solemn sound, and straight on deck appear,  
And gath'ring near the lifeless mass of clay,  
Prepare the last sad obsequies to pay.

The condescending chiefs their presenee  
lend,

And, in a silent troop the rites attend.

The pious chaplain now, with solemn pray'rs,

The hearts of all the gallant crew prepares.

With deep, impressive accents he has read

The mournful service, sacred to the dead,

Where man's mortality, and grace divine,

Judiciously display'd, in full perfection shine.

The melting seamen, who like children weep,

Prepare to launch their shipmate in the  
deep!

And, gently gliding down the vessel's side,

He darts and sinks beneath the flashing tide.

These pious rites perform'd; the crew dis-  
perse;

And whilst the vet'ran's praises they rehearse,

The honest tar to whom in charge he gave

The little all he muster'd on the wave,

Still on the gangway stood, with tearful eye,

And thus he moraliz'd, with many a sigh:

“ Poor Jack is gone ; my messmate good and  
kind,

And scarce has left a better man behind ;  
For worth and skill his equals were but few ;  
I knew him well, and ev'ry seaman knew,  
And, knowing, lov'd ; and many an honest tear,  
And frequent sigh, shall prove their love sincere.

Rude though he was, and in his outward form,  
Bore the rough trace of many a heavy storm ;  
His mind was gentle, and his manners mild ;  
Simple and inoffensive as a child.

Well could his heart the softest passions prove,  
Warm was his friendship, faithful was his love.  
True to his king, and zealous in the cause  
For which her mighty sword Britannia draws,  
Oft have I seen him, in the direful fight,  
Fierce as the angry lion in his might ;  
But when the crimson tide had ceas'd to flow,  
And France confess'd the prowess of her foe,  
The first he was to render to her crew  
The rights of pity and compassion due.

“ He oft, to toils and perils well inur'd,  
The ever-changing ocean's shoeks endur'd ;  
Saw Death appear in ev'ry hideous form,  
Ride on the bullet, stir the madd'ning storm ;  
Yet ne'er could danger, though impending nigh,  
Wake in his breast one sad desponding sigh ;  
For oft he said that nought could antedate,  
And nought retard, the hour prescrib'd by Fate ;  
Each in his season must receive his doom,  
Some in a billow, others in a tomb.

“ But what avails his merits now to tell?  
How brave and good he was is known full well ;  
What though he weather'd, with undaunted front,  
The tempest's fury and the action's brunt ;  
Clear'd the fell shoals of pining anxious eare,  
Which British prisoners in Gallia share ;—  
Death bearing down on him with flying tack,  
Has to the masts his topsails laid abaek ;  
Brought him up standing, and he ne'er shall  
weigh  
His anchor, till the gen'ral muster day ;

When, with a flowing sail, on breezes soft,  
His happy soul shall gaily soar aloft.  
Till then, on beds of coral may he rest,  
And the dark wave flow lightly o'er his breast."

Now through the sparkling deep the vessel  
glides  
And the full canvas draws the airy tides :  
Again the tars the soften'd pleasure prove,  
The cheering hope, of meeting those they love.  
Affection, nurs'd by absence, to their hearts  
Her holy flame, her genial warmth imparts ;  
And as the fanning gales of Expectation blow,  
With ardour most intense their honest bosoms  
glow.

And now, as nearer England's coast they drew,  
Expecting soon her lofty hills to view,  
A coming sail attracts the seamens' gaze,  
Whose pointed gaff the British flag displays ;  
And O ! what rapture swell'd in ev'ry breast ;—  
What strong sensations ev'ry eye express'd,—



When now, as side-by-side the vessels lie,  
The joyful sounds of "PEACE" fill all the  
sky!

Without command, aloft they run in eronds,  
And fill, of either mast, the spreading shrouds;  
Then speak their transports in so loud a cheer—  
The waves astonish'd stand, the sound to hear.  
And lo! in all the wildness that so long  
Has charact'riz'd the British nautic throng,  
Their hats and caps, with one extatic twirl,  
Far out into the wond'ring sea they hurl!\*  
Such frantic joy possess'd those thoughtless elves,  
'Twas almost strange they had not hurl'd them-  
selves!

And now, on deck descending, they give loose  
To all the mirth such tidings can produce,  
And in gymnastic feats and manly plays  
To shew his skill and vigour each essays.

---

\* This singular mode of declaring their joy at similar tidings, was actually adopted in one of our line-of-battle ships at the close of the last war.

To harsh-ton'd instruments see these advance,  
And to rude melody as rudely dance;  
Whilst 'neath the pressure of their hamm'ring  
feet,

The beams and decks in closer union meet!  
To its best purpose they the dance practise,  
Not as a grace, but as an exercise.  
Alternately they glide, they set, they bound,  
And all the vessel echoes with the sound.

Lo! here another troop their time employ  
In boisterous sports, to evidence their joy;  
Sports that would make a home-bred landsman  
stare—

To *sling the monkey* and to *bait the bear*\*  
They turn their thoughts; while oft the honest  
sound

Of heart-felt laughter shakes the vessel round.  
Let Grecian poets vaunt the sounding names  
Of those who figur'd at their eivie games;

---

\* Two games common amongst seamen.

Let later bards, no less enraptur'd, tell,  
At joust or tournament what sport befell;  
Had all the famous heroes, who, of yore  
Follow'd Pelidès to the Trojan shore;  
Or all the martial knights, in Gallia bred,  
Whom love of Fame in quest of danger led,—  
Ventur'd to cope with Britain's sturdy band;  
Soon, 'neath the prowess of their anvil-hand,  
Sprawling, disgrac'd, had they with shame con-  
fest,

“With Europe's lords 'tis folly to contest.”

The happy Frenchmen, (pris'ners now no more)  
Are free the spacious vessel to explore;  
All ancient enmities and discords cease,  
And man to man is join'd in bonds of peace.

Soon land they make. Before their gladden'd  
eyes  
The Scilly Islands, clad in mists, arise.  
Due north from these appears the tall *Land's End*,  
Which granite rocks from stormy waves defend.

---

Fair is the day; the welkin bright and clear,  
And high the azure British hills appear,—  
Their native hills, where soon they hope to find  
Their dearest ties, in sorrow left behind.  
Swift o'er the graceful-rolling waves they fly,  
And stronger grows the landscape on the eye;  
And as a bird, which from her moss-built nest  
By hunger or necessity was press'd,  
Claps her delighted wings, as, stor'd with food,  
She hastens to rejoin her callow brood;  
So the glad tars indulge the blissful sight,  
And feast upon the prospect with delight.

And now, between the cultivated lands,  
And that tall tow'r\* which as a beacon stands,  
Bas'd on a dang'rous rock; the vessel flies,  
And soon the haven cheers the sailor's eyes.  
The bleak Rame-head they pass; then sweeping  
round  
With shorten'd sail, explore the open sound;

---

\* The Eddystone light-house.

And, gliding onward with a gentle force,  
Along the mazy channel\* take their course.  
Now, rounding that bleak point, and towret  
hoar,  
That stands projecting from the eastern shore;—  
Before the fav'ring gale the vessel goes,  
Up to her former station in Hamoaze.  
Lo! on the hills again what crouds are seen,  
Gazing delighted on the beauteous scene;  
Whilst sounding horns, and heavy-rolling drums  
Swell the extatic voice that cries "She comes!"  
Up fly the sails; and, to the yard confin'd  
By brails and ties, no more entice the wind;  
Down drops the anchor through the plashing  
main,  
And the big cable thunders in his train.  
The joyful seamen now the yards ascend,  
And from their stations all the sails unbend.  
Next from the ship they hoist each warlike store,  
And send it to the magazines on shore.

---

\* Between St. Nicholas' Island and the main land.

Stripp'd of their rigging,—o'er the vessel's  
side

The masts and yards the skilful heroes guide ;  
And, lash'd securely by an able hand,  
Are through the buoyant waters tow'd to land.  
The lighten'd vessel, eas'd of such a weight,  
O'er the green wave looks up in greater state.

At length the tars, from all their toils reliev'd,  
Their scanty, hard-earn'd pittance have receiv'd ;  
And those who feel no more a wish to roam,  
Hasten to share it with their friends at home.  
The rest, (alas ! I grieve the tale to tell,  
A tale so sorrowful, yet known so well !)  
Squander the little treasures they possess,  
In orgies foul, and riotous excess !  
Till, all exhausted,—the inviting door  
That claim'd them once, stands open now no  
more,  
And while 'pale Famine stares them in the  
face,  
No friendly heart commiserates their case !



Ye learned senators! the nation's pride,  
Whose hands the great machine of empire guide,  
O! think upon the brave, but thoughtless crew,  
And render to their wants, assistance due.

Kind Heav'n has kept them from the hungry  
main,

And brought them to their native land again;  
Be yours the boast the gallant band to save  
From dangers worse than those of war or wave.

Let not those harpies on their treasures prey,  
Nor painted syrens, still more false than they;  
But let your wisdom shield them from those  
harms,

And guide them to their grateful kindred's  
arms:

So when again the brazen trump of war,  
Shall call the sons of valour from afar;  
Brave volunteers shall fill your num'rous fleet,  
And France again shall feel a full defeat.

Now turn, my muse; and in thy closing lay  
The final picture of the ship display.

Lo! where she lies; her days of service o'er,  
Regardless of the distant ocean's roar.  
Secur'd by chains to yon enormous buoy,  
No driving tempests can her rest annoy.  
A few small solitary ropes invest  
Her naked masts, no more with rigging drest;  
A snowy awning all her top conceals,  
And from the heat and wet her flooring veils.  
Her silent decks, depopulated quite,  
Where not a single store attracts the sight,  
Where seldom is the human figure view'd,—  
Appears a dreary wilderness of wood.

So lay the BRITISH OAK, and all the train  
That shar'd with her the perils of the main;  
And so the proudest man-of-war shall lie,  
Naked and bare to ev'ry gazer's eye.  
Yet oft, as wafted o'er the gurgling tide  
The insect boats on pleasure's wing shall glide,  
Their joyous crews, as round the ship they  
steal,  
A sweet, a patriotic glow shall feel;

---

And wond'ring look on that prodigious hull  
Which once, of stores and gen'rous seamen full,  
Around the ocean spread Britannia's fame,  
And bade the trembling world pay homage to her  
name!

THE END.

---

CONGDON, PRINTER, DOCS.

## ERRATA.

---

BOOK I. p. 10, line 4 from the bottom, for *their* read *his*.

BOOK VIII. p. 217, line 12, for *ties* read *lines*.

---

## TO THE BINDER.

---

The Binder is requested to put the Plate of *The Launch* to face the Title; and the other Plates at the beginnings of the Books to which they respectively belong.

P. 73, Sig. E. should be *cancelled*, and the other that is given placed in its room.

